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so as to gratify the devils which have taken up their abode in the neighbourhood so that they shall not trouble the work in progress. Then the four corner-posts and the centre post are set up, and the low stone walls, on which the house will rest, are built. The building should always start from the east. After the pillars and stone walls have been set up straight by an overseer the building proceeds without direction, the walls, flooring, ceiling, rafters and finally the thatch being built. When people know that a house is being built or repaired they come to help spontaneously; they are given no pay or wages of any sort except a meal at the end of the day; but they know that they in their turn will receive help when they need it. Men, women and children all lend a hand at the various tasks; but women are considered incapable of handling the biggest pieces of timber.

Some time after its completion the house must be consecrated by lamas and Mun with the ceremony of *Tashi chéné*; ideally this should be performed as soon as the house is completed and repeated twice in subsequent years; but it is often not done immediately for the owner may not possess the ox and other necessary materials. When the first meal is eaten in the completed house some old and experienced man (not the house-owner himself, but it does not matter who else) must make a small hole in the roof immediately above the fireplace and throw out a live ember and some water; this is done so that the smoke may go out properly and not fill the house.

The ceremony of *Tashi chéné* is as follows. First of all incense leaves are burned to pacify the demons who live in the earth below the house and who may have inhabited the trees of which the house is built. Then a live ox is dedicated by a Mun to all the gods, slaughtered and cut up; the head, right foreleg and left hind-leg (these portions are called *ga-zook*) are given to the carpenters who have worked on the house as their fee. After this a lamaist ceremony, with music and readings from the appropriate books, is performed, at the end of which the chief lama present (if possible one of the Dorjé Lapoon)[11] will anoint the house-pillars with blood, *chi*, liquor and butter, starting with the western pillar and proceeding to

[11] Dorjé Lapoon is the title given to the oldest, wisest, and most revered lamas; it is not strictly translatable: dorjé is the sacred 'thunderbolt' which is part of the lama's sacred paraphernalia; lapoon means teacher. In works dealing with Tibet the title is usually translated as 'abbot', but this term seems to me inappropriate for non-resident dignitaries.

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much relation to what the other workers are doing. Men, women and children all work together, and the task proceeds in a rather haphazard fashion, to the accompaniment of a constant fire of jokes, most of them obscene. When the work is finished all those who have helped are given a feast.

Attached to some households and fields is an ambivalent supernatural called *Thyak-dum* (white head). If this supernatural is good-tempered and contented he will bring health and prosperity to the home, and possibly, though people are not so sure about this, punish marauders in the family's fields; if he is angry he will bring disease and loss to the people who neglect him. Consequently when people live in a new house they must find out if *Thyak-dum* lives there, and if so, if they can control him. His whereabouts are discovered by a Mun going into meditation and seeing his presence mystically. If the house-owners can control *Thyak-dum* they will burn butter and incense leaves on some embers, and then sprinkle these embers with water and tell the supernatural to go away. If this fails they will make the *lafét* sacrifice (this sacrifice recurs constantly in the ceremonies of the Mun). On a wicker winnowing tray are placed banana leaves, and on top of them three rows of ground corn, and pieces of ginger, wild bird and dried fish; this offering is dedicated by a Mun who also offers *chi* in a cup ceremonially buttered; after which the sacrifice is taken to the top of some high place and left there, uneaten.

In some houses however it is divined that though *Thyak-dum* is present the house-owner cannot control him. In such cases a little house has to be built for him, standing in the fields near the house. This 'devil's house' consists of a miniature Lepcha house about two feet wide, thatched and made of bamboo, raised about four feet off the ground on four bamboos. Nobody except the sacrificer (preferably a Mun, but any man who knows how and is not a lama will do) must touch, or even go too near this 'devil's house'; were anyone to do so they would become seriously ill. Twice a year, when the barley and when the rice is ripe, sacrifices must be placed inside this devil's house; the sacrifice consists of the fresh grain, together with meat, fish and silver money. When the new sacrifice is made the old one is removed and thrown away; the money however can be taken back into use. Besides these sacrifices a special pig must be kept penned for *Thyak-dum*; this pig is always called the pig of *Thyak-dum*. When it gets old it must be replaced by a young piglet; the old one is killed, and its cooked

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intestines—the heart, liver and lungs, the *shafot*—are cooked with rice and offered to *Thyak-dum* together with three *patyoot* of fresh *chi*. *Thyak-dum* is partially attached to the house, and partially to the inhabitants thereof; that is to say that people coming into a new house would have to exorcise him were they able to do so; but if the old inhabitants had moved to another dwelling *Thyak-dum* would accompany them, spending most of his time with them, but occasionally returning to his and their old home. This last point is almost purely theoretical, for it very very seldom happens that Lepchas change their homes. If a house proved consistently unlucky, with many people dying and nothing prospering, and if it were divined that the house was the cause of these disasters, the survivors might move; but although some houses in Lingthem had had far more than their share of death and misfortune the inhabitants still stayed in them. The only reason for which houses were actually abandoned was loneliness, because the few survivors preferred to live with relations rather than cope with the work alone.

V

In front of each Lepcha house is a field fenced in with bamboo; it is called the garden (*sing*), and in it are raised those vegetables and roots which are used for flavouring food. These however are only grown in small quantities on the edge, and the greater part of the field is sown with grain crops; first of all barley and spring wheat mixed, which ripens in April, and subsequently maize. This garden is the only portion of Lepcha land which receives animal manure; it is against the house, under which domestic animals shelter at night; their dung is collected and thrown over the fence. At the bottom of nearly every garden is a plantation of bamboos, cultivated so as to have an easily available supply of this invaluable material. Near the house too are usually a small number of fruit trees—oranges, peaches, apples, pears, plums, tree-tomatoes—and occasionally one or two shrubs, usually roses, are grown for their flowers.

The rest of the land of the household is scattered all over the surrounding district, and it is seldom that people own the land near their house. All possess some strips of land—often more than a dozen for a single household—on the warmer lower slopes of the valley, where the climate is suitable for the cultivation of wet rice, cardamum, and some of the earlier millets or eleusines.

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habitations of devils are paid the respect of avoidance; and should a man be forced to go near to one of an evening he would perhaps burn a little incense—either juniper leaves or rice mixed with butter—so that the devil shall be gratified and not pursue him.

Except for being avoided and pointed out as local curiosities these devils' habitations are not distinguished in any way. Sacrifices are generally not made to or near them; if it were divined that illness was caused by a manifestation of a devil whose exact habitation was known, offerings might be made at that place; but I neither came across nor heard of one specific instance of this. All the numerous ceremonies that I witnessed and heard about took place in or just outside the house of the actual or potential sufferer; and though the offerings were often carried away after, they were never taken to the devil's habitation, but either to uncultivated ground, or to a place where two paths crossed. Only in one case did I hear of a devil's habitation being paid attention to. In the 'garden' of Jiroong are two outcrops of rock, which are the homes of Sabdok *moong* and his wife Loo *moong*. This female devil causes a specific skin disease, and if a person living in the neighbourhood should suffer from this, her stone (the lower of the two) will be anointed with holy water by a lama, and with milk by a Mun. It had been discovered by divination that this was the only home of Loo *moong* in the immediate neighbourhood, and the somewhat rare skin-disease, which is her speciality, could only arise from the anger of that particular manifestation.

The three big stones called *Kali lyang* in different parts of Lingthem fall into a different category. They are the places where laymen make sacrifices to keep away predatory animals. These sacrifices of different sorts of food are made once in the hot weather and once in the cold, and at other times if predatory animals are causing anxiety or annoyance. The stones themselves have no supernatural value at all; they are just the places where the sacrifices are always made.

There is however one big exception to the general rule. Nearly every family line—*ptso*—originated from the union of a particular lake and a particular mountain, the lake being the mother.[12] To these maternal lakes either annual or triennial (depending on the customs of the *ptso* in question) offerings must be made by all the descendants, or the inhabiting supernatural will withdraw her

[12] The Salong *ptso*, to which the serpent eaters of Pantoong belonged, is peculiar in tracing its original ancestor to the union of a woman with a monkey.

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favour and the people will not prosper and may suffer from sore eyes. It is not necessary that everyone should visit the lake in person; gifts can be given by proxy by another member of the same *ptso*.

There is another lake, *Luksom partam*, high up in Zongu, from whence birth is meant to have originated. Sterile couples who wish for children should visit this lake, spend the night on its bank copulating, and then in the morning throw into the waters a silver rupee and a *chimi* (altar light) to please the gods. If necessary this may be repeated annually for three years. The old widow, a nun, who told me about this had performed the complete rite with her husband, but unsuccessfully.

The connection between water and birth runs all through the Mun mythology. In the divine world where the two gods Tak-bo-*thing* and Narzong-*nyou* live there is a stream called Lungfung which represents the birth of male children, and a well called Rung-zel *oong-lap* which represents the birth of female children. This well is guarded by a supernatural boy called Sathim *ong*, and on occasion a family which has many girls and no boys will get a Mun to make sacrifices to the boy and the two gods to make the two pieces of water change place.

It will be noted that even in the case of these sacred lakes an explicit distinction is made between the lakes themselves and the supernaturals who inhabit them.

Devils have been occasionally seen by some people, sometimes looking like fierce animals, sometimes more or less like human beings (though generally covered with hair), sometimes as misty and gigantic shapes. They are far more frequently heard, whistling and crying, sometimes wailing like a banshee; and the god of hunters, Pong *rum*, persecutes those who displease him with poltergeist-like performances, throwing stones at the people or their houses and so on. To see or hear a devil is alarming, but not excessively so; there is nothing to be done except to run away or to turn aside one's eyes; though some bold people throw stones at devils and shoo them away as though they were marauding dogs. In the case of poltergeist performances the sufferer will burn incense, or perhaps just smoke a cigarette at the devil. To guard against the accidental meeting of devils the lamas prepare amulets, composed of charms written on paper and sewn into a piece of cloth which is worn on the dress; and Mun give the specially prepared roots of *s'lek* (a dioecious plant which grows above the snow level) to be rubbed over the body.

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CHAPTER NINE

RELIGION III: THE PEOPLE OF MAYEL

i

I stated earlier that the Lepchas have two or perhaps three religions. My reason for this statement is that the ritual connected with harvesting and hunting, though performed by Mun, have a number of features which do not occur elsewhere. It seems to me possible that the worship of the people of Mayel, and perhaps of Pong *rum* the god of hunters, is of a different origin to the other Mun ceremonies; unfortunately too little is known about the ritual of neighbouring tribes to enable profitable speculation to be made as to whether either or both ceremonies are relatively modern importations from outside, or whether they are on the contrary the oldest Lepcha customs. The most outstanding differences with other Mun ritual, and indeed with ordinary Lepcha life, is, first, a discrimination against women, secondly, an insistance on virginity for some of the celebrants, and thirdly a suggestion of the danger of menstruating women. Women may perform the sacrifice to the people of Mayel, but if they do so the ceremony is curtailed and fewer objects employed; they not only cannot sacrifice to Pong *rum* but must not even be aware when the sacrifice takes place; and the popped corn and *chi* which are employed in it, if not made by a man, which is preferable, must be made by a virgin girl. The chief offerings to the people of Mayel are the *lafét* sacrifice and *sakyou faat*; the small bird for the *lafét* must be killed by a virgin boy, and the strained *chi* poured into the buttered cup by a virgin girl.

This insistance upon virginity is unparalleled in Lepcha life;[1]

[1] The only other instance is in the sacrifice to a pair of demons who cause a coughing disease (? tuberculosis) and whose presence and ritual were divined and by a Nandjému less than ten years ago. For this ceremony the popped corn must be made by a virgin girl, and the Mun must fast for twenty-four hours before the sacrifice. Only two people know how to perform this very modern importation.

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people of Mayel would fall asleep and would not send the migratory birds. There is a fairly vague tradition that menstruating women should not approach the flowering plants which bear the fruit that the people of Mayel sell—pumpkins, cucumbers, egg-plants and chillies—or the plants will rot.[3] Opinion about this prohibition was very mixed; some people, especially those who have had much contact with other races, think there may be some truth in the matter, while the more conservative, such as the Mandal, think the statement ridiculous.

The preliminary ceremonies, in those houses where they are held, are small repetitions of the big ceremony after the sowing of all the grains which must be held in each house. It is considered desirable that the same people should officiate in each ceremony, and also that the woman who sings in the spring should take the rôle of Talyeu-mu at the harvesting, and, if possible that the sacrificer should take the rôle of Mayel-mu. If the sacrificer is a woman this of course cannot be done.

The spring offerings consist of the *lafét* sacrifice and *sakyou faat*. The food on the *lafét* is divided into three lines of three heaps each; the centre line is for the people of Mayel, that on the right for all men's patron gods, and especially those of the house-father, that on the left for all women's patron gods, and especially those of the house-mother. The dried bird's flesh in the *lafét* must be a special very small bird which has been killed by a virgin boy; if bigger birds are used or if the boy is not a virgin the gods will be displeased and will not eat and there will be a bad harvest. If the sacrificer is a man there is also offered a *taming* which consists of a long stick to which are attached tiny parcels containing every sort of crop and also tiny *patyoot* of *chi*; this is suspended from the roof above the officiant's head. Before the ceremony begins a song is sung in honour of the people of Mayel and then the Mun offers to them *sakyou faat* and powdered portions of the objects on the *lafét*, calling on the people of Mayel to accept the offerings and throwing them before him or her on to the floor. The cup is constantly re-filled with *chi* with a wooden ladle by a young virgin girl who is sitting beside the Mun. After that everybody except the Mun officiating has to drink some strained *chi* from the buttered cup and eat a part of the offerings and sing songs in honour of the people of Mayel; those people who do not or cannot sing them-

[3] I am told that this is a formal rule among the Nepali, who also consider that these fruit should never be pointed at with the finger.

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241 1782 selves will give a small present to the Mun who will sing for all of them. The grain which is used in this sacrifice has to be specially ripened in the sun in the same way as the grain for seed is ripened. This completes the ceremony of sowing and it is always followed by a feast in which meat is eaten.

The ceremony of harvesting is far more complicated. It is only employed for the dry rice. When the dry rice is ripe a little is picked to be prepared for *chi* and when the *chi* is ready the owner of the field summons all his friends and they go together to pick [1753] rice. Until the ceremony is completed nobody, not even children, may pick any grain or he would get ill; if anybody gets stomach-ache at that period people will say that he has picked rice before it was harvested.

It is necessary to have ready beforehand the smoke-dried *tafoot* of a pig. The *tafoot* would seem to be the gall-bladder or spleen; it is round and has a white smelly liquid inside and is found near the bladder, but in pigs and musk deer it is said to be found near the penis at the end. On the day of reaping this *tafoot* is taken up to the field of dry rice together with two burning brands from the house-fire and also a *patyoot* of *chi* made from the new rice. When the party arrives, a place in the centre of the field is chosen as the *ʒo-lam* (the place where the crops are heaped); some rice-plants in the centre of the *ʒo-lam* are tied together into a sheaf and then the two burning brands will be held above them and on these a piece of the *tafoot* will be put. Then an old and experienced man—not the owner of the field but any one of his workers—will be chosen to represent a man of Mayel (called for the ceremony Mayel-mu) and he will blow on the *tafoot* and speak; while this is done a special measuring basket is held upside down over the brand. The old man will summon the gods and the ancestors and will say 'Come and see the smoke; burr—burr—burr—burr'. Then all the people present will repeat, 'burr—burr—burr'. By this invocation it is hoped that the gods will come and bring back all the grain eaten by wild birds and animals.

Standing by the speaker is a woman not directly connected with the field owner, who has been chosen for the day to represent Talyeu-mu, one of the earth sisters. When Mayel-mu has finished his invocation the measuring basket is put on his back and Talyeu-mu cuts the tied grain and puts it in the basket. Then Talyeu-mu and Mayel-mu, who acts as her load carrier, go round the *ʒo-lam* cutting a basket of rice for Talyeu-mu; at the same time

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the others cut two baskets of rice for the people of Mayel. When the three baskets have been cut four or five reed mats are put down on the flattened ground and all dance on the rice to separate the grain from the chaff. All the dances are round dances and semi-acrobatic, consisting chiefly of hopping and jumping; nine different types are recognised and three rounds of each type are danced in turn. After the dancing Talyeu-mu goes round the edge of the field cutting another basket while all the other reapers work in a row to fill two more baskets which are heaped up like the first; after these have been put on the *ʒo-lam* the *nam-toak* (potential curse) is lifted and all can cut as they like; but during the whole day Talyeu-mu and Mayel-mu cut apart from the others. When the second heap of rice has been poured on to the *ʒo-lam* a fence is erected to the south of it consisting of three leafy saplings joined by a bamboo; on it a mat is hung and then from the three posts are fastened three bundles of rice-plants, ears downwards, hanging over the mat. After this fence is set up the *patyoot* of new *chi* is placed against it and Mayel-mu offers it with an invocation. Then at the four corners of the *ʒo-lam* are erected four posts of a sort of reed or bamboo; the top part is split into three and the two side pieces are bent down to make loops.

When the *ʒo-lam* has been completed all do as they like; some gather rice, some dance, some drink *chi* and so on. The harvesting must be completed before the sun has touched the hills; if all is not cut by then the work must go on the next day and the people must spend the night on the harvest field, as will be explained lower down. Right at the end must be gathered another three baskets of rice which must be completed at the same time; these three baskets are all emptied at the same time to the east of the heap and all present cry 'burr, burr, burr'. The rice is now put in eight heaps; that of the morning is put in the centre where the house-mother works; that of Talyeu-mu to the east and the other six heaps in a semi-circle to the north; these six heaps are named after six big mountains in the neighbourhood. Then the rice is separated from the chaff and straw partially by hand and partially by dancing; all work together at the different heaps except the house-mother and Talyeu-mu who work theirs by themselves. When all the rice is sifted the house-mother and Talyeu-mu push the heap of Talyeu-mu to the centre heap saying 'May the heap support us firmly and be as the sea'. After that all the other heaps are pushed into the centre, one after the other in due order. Then a wreath of rice

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241 straw is placed on top of the big heap and on that three pieces of charcoal and then the *tafoot* is put on top. Then all except Mayel-
782 mu withdraw and look on from afar and Mayel-mu makes a fixed invocation starting 'To—burr, burr, burr; you different gods, we summoned you this morning to bring the rice which grows like a tree and the maize which grows like a tree from Mayel. If storms have destroyed and wasted our crops bring that grain back, if birds or rats have destroyed or wasted our crops bring that grain back, burr, burr, burr.' After this all present say, 'burr, burr, burr', and he too will withdraw and watch to see if the grains of rice roll down off the heap; if they do it is a good sign; if not it means that the harvest will not last long. Then the charcoal and *tafoot* are taken away and the big basket of Talyeu-mu is used as a measure for the grain. If all this has been done while the sun is still high each helper is given his wage of about 30 lbs. of rice and goes back to the owner's house. There they drink *chi* and sing, Talyeu-mu competing against the rest; she will sing summoning the people of Mayel and the others will reply impersonating the gods, saying
241 'No, we won't come', and mocking her. As much *chi* as people can
786 drink is given and everybody sleeps the night at the house.

If, however, the sun touches the hills before the rice is reaped another procedure is followed; the cut grain is covered with mats, a fireplace is set up and food cooked and the night is spent on the straw. On that night anybody may sleep with anyone else provided the rules of incest are not broken; and if a man should see his wife sleeping with another he must never refer to it, not even to his friends. There may only be two or three copulating couples, but it is better if there are more, for then Talyeu-Nimu and Sangvo-Nimu will be pleased at seeing so many people copulating and will send them a good harvest. If boys are too young to copulate they will just sleep with their friends. This ritual copulation is called *ʒo-tsom-thap* (pressing the rice; this is an elegant periphrasis for copulation). The rest of the rice is cut in the morning.

241 As soon as chi has been prepared the *lafèt* is offered with the new
782 *chi* to the people of Mayel and all the people pray, saying 'May these crops feed us long'. After the sacrifice all must eat the new rice together; should any one person eat before the others he would be ill.

241 Until everybody in the neighbourhood has performed the
784 sacrifice grain must not be dried in the sun, nor may people even

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24| living outside the closed community the prohibition is impossible
784 to observe; the Lepchas of Zongu are well aware that there are good harvests where this prohibition is disregarded; but they consider that were *they* to neglect it their harvests would be bad as they live nearer the people of Mayel.

241 The people who represent Mayel-mu and Talyeu-mu when reaping are not paid any special honours; they represent the gods but they are not considered to have anything divine about them during this representation. For other crops there are not any elaborate ceremonies. When buckwheat is ripe a little of it is offered in the householder's house to Konchen, with an offering of buckwheat *chi*. 'The people of Sandong make a buckwheat cake and offer it but we don't.' At the time of planting the wet rice a general ceremony is performed in which a chicken or a goat is offered and also a plate with *chimi*, etc., on it; 'terraced rice comes from Nepal so it isn't really necessary to give thanks, but here we live near Mayel and it is better to be careful.' When a field is cleared in the forest for the first time a chicken is offered for each member of the household and also a plate with *chimi*, etc., to keep away illness and predatory animals. This ceremony can be performed by anybody who knows how to do so.

iii

224 For the annual sacrifice to Moot *rum* Tseu, who is also called
● 782 Pong *rum*, the popped corn and *chi*, if not prepared by a man, which is more desirable, must be prepared by a virgin girl. Pong *rum* together with his wife Shing *rum*, is the lord of all wild animals and the patron saint of hunters. Every year in October a joint sacrifice has to be made to him by all the hunters of the neighbourhood; the sacrifice consists of popped corn, *chi*, dried fish and bird, ginger, arum root, some other tuber, sugar cane, banana and wormwood flowers. If possible all the prepared ingredients should be made by a man and no woman must witness the sacrifice or even know when it has been performed. Pong *rum*, it will be remembered, is the guardian of the road to Mayel.

In the forest as soon as an animal has been killed and cut up a sacrifice must be made to Pong *rum*. Big leaves are cut and put on the ground and then the animal is divided up and the head is put in the front with a foreleg and hind leg on either side and singed intestines in the middle. This is all 'offered' to Pong *rum*, and

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the hunter crouching behind and speaking very slowly and softly, gently throws the burnt intestines bit by bit over the animal's head. On his return to the village great care must be taken that no woman sees the animal's head; if she did the hunter would have no success in future.

To know how to sacrifice to Pong *rum* it is necessary to learn how to, and to receive *loong*; for this purpose the novice goes to anybody who knows—maybe his father or some other relation or a friend—taking with him *chi* and a ceremonial scarf and a rupee. Great care must be taken that no woman is present at this time. When the older man sees the gifts he enquires what they are for and is told it is to learn how to sacrifice. The older man then arranges the sacrifice and tells the neophyte to sit with his back to him: he must not look but must listen most attentively. After that the neophyte on the next suitable occasion will make the sacrifice; the instructor will be near him and if he makes a mistake will nudge him, whereat the sacrifice must be stopped short. Subsequently the neophyte will take another lesson, continuing until he is word perfect and has received his *loong* and can sacrifice on his own.

A person who has once been to the communal sacrifice to Pong *rum* should continue to do so all his life; he may, however, give it up, in which case he is liable to be troubled with poltergeist manifestations by Pong *rum*, who anyhow if he is displeased with a hunter will pursue him whistling, and the thump of heavy stones falling will be heard, though no stones are seen to fall. It is even preferable for hunters' children to continue the ritual.

Kurma used to hunt but does so no longer and has given up going to the sacrifice to Pong *rum*; for he is afraid that should he go and then not hunt he would become mad. As things are he is somewhat persecuted by Pong *rum*; he describes these persecutions with the greatest detail and indifference. He says quite freely that he does not care a bit.

Near his house is an orange tree and some time ago on a moonlight night he heard distinctly the sound of big stones being thrown under this tree; but there was nothing to be seen so he knew it was Pong *rum*; he therefore returned to the house, lit some incense leaves and butter and came out and offered it to the god saying 'Please forgive us; we have no intention of hunting'.

'Only a month ago when some friends were in my house with me drinking *chi* I heard my dog which was tethered some way

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from the house barking furiously; I went outside expecting that somebody was passing but I could see no-one. When I returned to the house we heard the dog whimper and then stop; we went outside and found its dead body in front of the house. Of course Pong *rum* had killed it, but I do not care: I just offered the gods some incense.'

Kurma's younger brother used to hunt but never learnt how to make the sacrifice properly; Kurma used to do it for him. But on one occasion when he was away, his maternal uncle sacrificed and instead of making the offering to Pong *rum* made it to his own god. This is one of the reasons given for this young man's subsequent violent death in the forest.[4]

Kurma's family are now very unlucky hunters and the reason is as follows. Three generations ago their forefather was a very lucky hunter who worshipped Shing *rum* (the wife of Pong *rum*). At that time the Mandal of the village was an unlucky hunter; he worshipped Pong *rum*. Now these two agreed to change gods. To do this they killed an ox and then drank three cups of *chi* mixed with the blood, with dabs of butter on the side, for this constitutes the most binding oath. From that day the descendants of the Mandal were always successful hunters while the descendants of the other man were always unlucky. Pong *rum* and Shing *rum* are naturally exclusively male gods.

Before drinking *chi* (in the case of lamas also before drinking tea) or eating food a little is offered to the gods. If the food is domestic in origin it is thrown away from the eater, if of wild origin towards the eater, that is backwards. These offerings are tiny and quite automatic; the 'straw' is lifted from the *chi* and flicked outwards; a few crumbs are dropped from the first handful. No form of prayer accompanies these offerings.

[4] See Chapter Fifteen, pp. 402–403.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

pigs, a large copper pot, or in lieu of it Rs. 20 for the girl's father, a length of fine cloth, or in lieu Rs. 13 (formerly Rs. 20) for the mother, Rs. 3 for the bride, and a ceremonial scarf and a rupee for the girl's *bek-bu*.

When these gifts have been collected, they are consecrated by a special Mun ritual in the groom's house before being taken to the girl's family. If the house contains a lamaist altar this is decorated and *chimi* are lit, and the offerings placed before it, the disembowelled pigs in front, and behind the copper pot with the other gifts on top of it. An officiant is needed to consecrate the gifts; it is preferable that the 'sacrificer', the *rum-faat-bu*, should be a Mun, but it can also be performed by any old and experienced layman with the necessary qualification. Incense is burned, *chi* from a buttered cup and rice offered, and a long invocation is made to the gods to bless the marriage and make it fruitful; besides the personal and *pyso* supernaturals of the groom special emphasis is placed on the appeal to Komsi*thing* and Tarbong-bo, who are involved in the original institution of marriage.[2] After the consecration a ceremonial meal of rice and sausages made from the pig's intestines is eaten, and the groom then sets off with his *bek-bu* and three men to carry the presents. The carriers should be ideally a paternal uncle, a maternal uncle and an elder brother; failing them, people standing in a similar position are employed.

At this visit the groom and his party usually stop three or four days at the girl's house. The two betrothed are meant to keep together, sitting by one another and feeding one another, and to sleep side by side. At this initial meeting the attention of all the elders is concentrated on noticing the way the two young people behave towards one another; because of this attention, and on account of the general situation, the young couple are usually in an agony of self-conscious shame and can hardly bear to look at or speak to one another.

After this initial visit the *asék* party returns home, but a few days later the groom makes a second visit, taking with him a gift of meat and usually accompanied by an uncle. At this visit the young couple, if they are of a suitable age, are meant to copulate together, and their uncles are meant to supervise this operation to make sure it takes place; if they do not, the one who refuses to do so—and it is considered equally likely that the refuser will be the boy or the girl—will be severely admonished and may be thrashed by

[2] See Appendix IV. The Sacred Story of the Origin of Marriage.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

000 "The Congress, which has refused office in six provinces where the party is in a position to form Ministries, observed a *hartal* to mark the inauguration of autonomy in the provinces.

"The *hartal* was observed in Calcutta by the closing of Hindu shops. A small minority of Moslem-owned shops were also closed.

"Public services continued as usual, but schools and offices under the control of the Calcutta Corporation were closed. No disturbances have been reported."

* * * * *

782 At almost the very moment when the Governor of Bengal
787 was administering the oath to his newly-appointed Ministers,
789 an old Lepcha woman was squatting on the ground in a remote valley in Sikkim, with an egg pressed against her forehead. This was the day of the *Cherim* ceremony, which is observed all over Sikkim twice in every year: once now, and again at the beginning of the winter. Its purpose is to find out what sickness is likely to trouble the village during the next few months and, since the Lepchas like to get as much benefit as possible out of any one celebration, also to keep
[887] away hail. Kahlyeu, a gentle old man of nearly eighty, had previously made a rough altar of the branches of trees. It
[133] faced up the valley in full sight of Kinchinjunga, the summit
[487] of which is only twenty miles away as the crow flies, but for poor toiling man a journey of many painful days along the
[197] roughest of paths, and through thick rhododendron forest, to
787 the lower slopes alone. On his roughly constructed altar
789 *Kahlyeu now put a large brass tray in which were seven*
778 cones of butter, four eggs (some said it should have been
782 three), one rupee, three small butter-lamps and a Tibetan
[285 ceremonial scarf. The tray was placed on top of a plaited
415] bamboo winnowing-tray, on which was spread a piece of red cotton cloth. All this was an offering to the spirits who dwell
[776] in the mountain, which the local people know only as Konchen. Before the eggs were placed in position Pom-ri, the old woman who was making the offering, placed each in

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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The *Cherim* ceremony. The *Mun* Pom-Ri divining by means of an egg.

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The rough altar, with the offering to Kinchinjunga in position.

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Kahlyea and the *Mun* imploring the spirits to accept the offering.

[facing p. 4]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

782 turn to her forehead and said a short prayer. She told us
787 afterwards that by this means she could ascertain what devils
789 of sickness were likely to trouble the village (on this occasion
778 it was coughs and cold); and by offering them the grain and other things ensure that their visitations should at least cause no permanent harm.

787 As soon as the eggs were placed in position on the tray a
789 bowl of burning juniper twigs was placed on the ground,
782 just to the right of the altar. This was to drive the clouds away from the top of the mountain in order that the spirits might see what was being offered them. Pom-ri now started to chant in a cracked and mumbling voice. In her right hand [415] she held a small drinking bowl, round the rim of which butter had been smeared. A woman helper ladled strained spirit into the bowl from time to time from a large vessel which stood on the ground beside her; and on the other side of Pom-ri stood Kahlyeu, his cap, filled with grain, in one hand. From time to time Pom-ri threw the contents of her bowl towards the mountain, when it was at once refilled by her assistant; and as she did this the old man threw out a handful of grain from his cap. He, too, chanted, and at times the pair seemed to be moaning in unison. But they were both so old, and their voices so cracked and low that it was impossible to catch their words. I did, however, frequently hear the word Konchen at the moment when the libations were being offered. This went on for about twenty minutes, and then the pair turned about and faced down the valley, chanting and making offering as before.

Having propitiated the spirits of Konchen they had now turned their attention to such evils as come from the direction of the plains; on this particular occasion it was hail. In the meantime a goat had been slaughtered in the bushes behind. [231] This was done by thrusting a short pointed bamboo stake into its heart, the usual method of killing small domestic animals. At the place where it was killed a fire was lighted and the carcass lightly singed. After this the meat, including the animal's head, the liver (on a stake), and the

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

washed entrails, together with a small bamboo container filled with the goat's blood, was placed on the ground in front of the altar. The old man and woman now chanted as before, after which the meat was taken away and distributed to all present under the supervision of the village Mandal, or head-man. The goat was offered first to Konchen and then to all the other spirits. During the whole of this celebration none of the spectators, of which there must have been fifty or sixty, paid the slightest attention to what was going on. As we later noticed, this was the case on all such occasions: the people merely sat round drinking and talking; but I did hear a child reproved for making too much noise while the actual chanting was in progress.

* * * * *

If one takes the night mail from Calcutta it is easily possible, by motoring from Siliguri, to reach Gangtok, the capital of independent Sikkim, well before lunch on the following morning. The motor road at present ends at Gangtok, but the Talung Valley can be reached the following evening by any moderately active walker. The actual distance is about twenty-five miles; but included in this is a descent of nearly three thousand feet, immediately followed by an ascent of like amount. This drop and subsequent rise is repeated again at the end of the journey, but fortunately on a smaller scale. If really in a hurry it would be possible to reach the Talung in something under thirty-six hours from Calcutta; but having crossed the rickety suspension bridge across the Teesta, the sole means of access to the valley, one steps backward in time, so to speak, into another world. In Calcutta (said to be the second city in the British Empire; but in my opinion an easy first in dirt and squalor) Englishmen, and others, toil all day in a vile climate for the sole purpose of acquiring more wealth than their fellows: but in the Talung Valley, which has meadows as green as any in Europe, and some of the finest mountain scenery in the world, money is considered of little importance, and one man

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

I suspect that geologists would find this explanation unacceptable: but in Lingtem there are no geologists; and as for me, I prefer the Lepcha story. It is a good example of their way of thinking and will serve as an introduction to what is to follow.

We reached Lingtem in an hour from the pass and found the headman waiting for us with a gift of eggs and milk. He told us we might live in the monastery itself; but this had the disadvantage that one might not smoke inside the building. Eventually, however, the Mandal said it would be all right providing there was no smoking in the actual rooms where the images are kept; so we decided to move in straight away.

For want of a better word in the English language the Lamaist *gompa* is generally described as a monastery, though such places can in no way be compared with the religious institutions known by that name in Europe. The inmates of *gompas* are sometimes celibates (but seldom so in Sikkim) and most monasteries own property: but apart from this there is, as Mme David-Neel, the eminent Tibetan scholar and traveller, has pointed out, hardly anything in common between the Christian and the Lamaist religious orders.

The Lingtem monastery is about sixty feet square and has two storeys. In appearance it is almost identical with the ordinary Lepcha house, except for its greater size, and the broad band of red ochre round its walls, which denotes that it is a sacred building. The lower floor contains the main hall, which is used regularly for services. Here there is a big altar containing many gilded images, with a specially fine one of Guru Rimpoche (Padma Sambhava, who first introduced Buddhism into Tibet) in the centre. In front of the images there are always seven small bowls of water, in order that the gods may wash and drink. These are emptied at dusk and refilled again at dawn. When the water is taken away it is replaced by one or more tiny wicks, floating in either butter or oil, which give a faint glimmer like a night-light. On special occasions there will be dozens of these

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

lights; grain and flowers are also offered to the gods from time to time.

On either side of the altar are pigeon-holes, in which the 222 volumes of the Teng-gyur (the great Commentary on the Lamaist Scriptures) are stored, the actual scripture itself, the Kang-gyur as it is called (108 volumes), being stored in the upstairs room which we used as a bedroom. There are no chairs in the monastery, the Lamas* (here called Yukman) sitting cross-legged on planks on the floor, which are arranged in two lines running at right angles to the altar. The head Lama, or Dorje Lopön, has a rough sort of seat on which he too, sits cross-legged. This, however, is raised a little above the level of the floor.

The main hall takes up most of the ground floor, but at one end there is a room, only about nine feet wide, which in addition to a small altar, complete with image, houses three enormous prayer-drums, which ring a bell each time they are turned completely round. These drums, or perhaps barrels would be a better word, are about ten feet high, and each is completely filled with strips of paper on which the magic formula *Om mane padme hum* has been written over and over again. One turn of the drum is equivalent to uttering this mystic sentence the same number of times that it has been written on the paper within. When one has nothing better to do, therefore, a quiet half-hour of turning a giant prayer-wheel is as good a means of acquiring merit as any other. People would often drop in at odd moments to do this.

The largest of the three drums had a rather elaborate top that projected through the ceiling into a small room above which we used as a bathroom. This top was decorated with a muslin flounce of red, blue, and yellow and looked something like a rather dirty ballet skirt. When the drum was turned

*The term Lama should rightly only be applied to a monk who has reached a certain definite standing in the Buddhist church by reason of his learning and piety. It is extremely doubtful if anyone in Lingtem has any claim to this title; but since the term is commonly, though quite incorrectly, used by most Western writers to denote any Lamaist monk, and since the Lepchas themselves use it in this way, I have decided to follow the general practice.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

olden days our fathers got their food from the forest; but times change; forest regulations were framed against us, and we had to buy our food. When friends called we could not refrain from sharing what we had with them, with the result that our year's store got consumed before the new crop was ready, and we had to go to the mahajan's shop and take it from him at an exorbitant rate of interest; and before we realised it we had become his slaves for life. There were no government rules against disposing of our land to others. We Lepchas were poor and we had to sell to the more thrifty Nepalese at a ridiculously low price.'

"That is how much of the Lepchas' land was acquired by Nepalese. Rules preventing the transfer to Nepalese except by the personal ruling of the Deputy Commissioner have largely stopped this evil. The Lepchas, however, have learned much from the Nepalese as to the tillage of the land, and many of them are now quite as good farmers as their instructors.

"Another incident occurs to me from the 'Young Men's' meetings on much the same subject. The point I would give is on the reasons why the Nepalese are still, as then, more thrifty than the Lepchas. One young man said: 'Have you ever seen the different sizes of the cooking vessels used by the Lepchas and the Nepalese on a journey? The Lepcha carries one which could cook for a family and will share with any fellow-traveller in need: the Nepali carried a little pot just sufficient for his own use; and even if his father were beside him he would not ask him to take a little.'

"This was doubtless an exaggeration; but speaking generally it does reveal an undoubted difference between the two peoples.

"Another fruitful cause of poverty among the Lepchas is their sacrifice of cattle and fowls on the advice of their priests in times of illness. Until that is stopped by the deliverance from the fear of evil spirits the Lepchas will remain poor. I have known it in times of prolonged and frequent illness in a family that every animal they have was

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

given in sacrifice; and, in addition, a promise given that when they are in a position to keep the pledge they will give the required animals to the spirits. No one will dare to break the pledge until he is freed from this wasteful superstition."

Personal communication from the Very Rev. Dr. J. A. Graham, C.I.E., D.D. 1937.

Missionary influence: a letter from a Christian Lepcha girl thanking a friend for a present.

"Kalimpong,
"10/9/37.

"Dear Mister Sahib,—

"Many many thanks for your affectionate parcel, which I received yesterday through a Chaprasi. By testing that parcel of an egg, I nearly fainted down, but I myself illustretted [*sic*] my heart. I hope you will be my ever provider. I hope for four dozen eggs of such kinds.

"Please excuse me for my mistake.

"Cheery You!

"Your ever helpless,
"J. M. Lepchani.

"P.S.—If you will not give the reply of this letter then and there I shall seldom write you again."

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2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

CHAPTER 5

Lamaism: Monks and Nuns

TO the ignorant Lepcha the world is peopled by spirits; evil spirits known as *Mung*, and good spirits known as *Rum*, or gods. It is difficult sometimes to decide whether a particular spirit is devil or god; for while a Mung is always evil, a Rum, if angered, will appear in a malicious guise and may then be referred to as a demon. Every happening in the material world is due to the influence of spirits. Devils cause sickness, bad harvests, and every other kind of misfortune: but provided they are appeased by means of the correct sacrifices their evil can be averted, and on occasions they may even be induced to further some particular project, such as causing the death of an enemy, or winning the heart of some apparently stony-hearted woman. Some earlier writers have described the Lepchas as animists, but I believe this idea to be mistaken. Animism implies the attribution of a living soul to inanimate objects and natural phenomena; but the Lepcha has not this belief. According to his ideas, trees, rivers, rocks and other natural objects are only the homes of spirits; but as such they must be treated with proper respect. The objects themselves, however, while they are sometimes thought to possess a separate soul, do not need to be propitiated. When a house, for instance, is being built, a sacrifice will be made when the trees are felled from which it is to be constructed. This sacrifice, however, is offered not to the spirits considered to be inherent in the trees themselves, but to compensate for any annoyance which might be caused to spirits living in them, and also as a general expiation for the sin of taking life; for trees, being living things, are thought to have separate souls of their own. This last is only a minor

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

consideration and its neglect would not cause any immediate retribution; but a failure to propitiate the actual spirits might be fraught with all sorts of evil consequences and no one would willingly omit to carry it out.

It is not possible for an ordinary man to have direct dealings with the spirit world, nor indeed would he normally know the cause of his particular trouble. The cause of certain common ills, such for instance as coughs and colds, boils or fever, are, of course, well known to most people, but not the special knowledge required to make the necessary sacrifices to the particular demon which has caused them. For this it is necessary to have recourse to a proper practitioner, either a *Mun* or a *Yukman*, which is the word used by Lepchas to denote a Lama. It seems certain that prior to the introduction of Buddhism into Sikkim such sacerdotal functions as were required by the Lepchas were carried out by Muns. Their services are still much in demand in Lingtem, where they work in close conjunction with the Lamas. In other parts of Sikkim, however, their numbers are steadily decreasing, and the tendency is for all priestly functions to be carried out only by Lamas. In the Kalimpong district (in British India) there are still large colonies of Lepchas, and amongst these people Muns have almost ceased to exist. Such as there are practise almost secretly, for their presence is not welcome to orthodox Lamas.

"A notable feature of Lamaism throughout all its sects," notes Waddell, "and decidedly un-Buddhistic, is that the Lama is a priest rather than a monk. He assigns himself an indispensable place in the religion and has coined the current saying, 'Without a Lama in front there is no (approach to) God.' He performs sacerdotal functions on every possible occasion, and a large proportion of the order is almost entirely engaged in this work. And such services are in much demand, for the people are in hopeless bondage to the demons, and not altogether unwilling slaves to their exacting worship."

The Lamas of Sikkim belong to the *Nin-Ma-pa* or

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

individual members of the community. Unlike Tibet, where animal sacrifice is practically unknown, many of these ceremonies, particularly those in connection with illness and other manifestations of devils, require the sacrifice of an ox or goat, and on such occasions the Lama is assisted by a Mun; for although the Lama has no objection to assisting at such a very un-Buddha-like ceremony he draws the line at actually taking life himself. He is a physician more than a priest, for he deals with the ills of the physical body rather than with those of the soul. Sometimes he is unable himself to diagnose the cause of trouble, and on such occasions he may call in a *Nunjimu*, a person who by dancing herself into a trance is able to ascertain the cause of the trouble, but not to cure it, this being the Lama's own province. The Lama does not, I think, claim for himself any supernatural power. He is merely "one who knows," as the Lepcha word *Yukman* implies, as opposed to the "ignorant one," or ordinary layman. The whole of his teaching is based upon cause and effect; and once a cause has been ascertained its treatment is merely the carrying out of a definite specified ceremony. This conception of course is quite in accordance with the best medical tradition; but it is more open to doubt whether Harley Street would approve of such treatment as, for instance, the sacrifice of a bullock, coupled with a thousand repetitions of the mystic formula "*Om mani padme hum*," as a cure for general debility. If a man calls in one Lama rather than another it is not because he has necessarily more faith in his powers, or thinks he has a better bedside manner, but because he knows more ceremonies: X may have studied only as far as the cure of the common cold; but Y may know how to ensure that your wife's next child is a boy. Either of these treatments would doubtless find favour in Europe; but in the meantime I cannot honestly recommend a pilgrimage to Lingtem for the purpose!

A boy does not usually become a Lama because he feels it is his right vocation but because his horoscope, prepared at birth, decrees it. Every child is born with certain signs, from

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

159 complained of pains in the heart and said that they were
753 caused by a demon known as Shuk-Sor Mung. When this Mung attacks animals they always die; but in the case of
● 782 human beings their evil can be averted by the sacrifice of two chickens, one white and one speckled, together with the usual offerings of grain. Heart trouble seems in some way to be connected with poison. This is the story Karma gave me:

173 About sixty years ago there were two brothers living in the
683 district named Tuk-Shyok and Sun-Kyon. They were supernaturals, and were in the habit of killing people by means of poison. Nobody would ever visit them; nor were they allowed to attend any of the local ceremonies. It was believed that they had caused the death of a number of people, and for this reason a meeting was called at which it was decided to kill them. Their mother, whose name was Na-Sor, was a Mun; and as such had special powers. It was decided to lock the door upon the two brothers after they had gone to sleep one night and then set fire to the house. At the time this happened their mother was not living with them, but occupied a lone hut a short distance away. She, however, saw the house burning and ran to see what was happening. She first jumped on the fire; and being a Mun was able to use her powers instantly to put it out. As soon as she had time to look around she found that her two sons were at the point of death: each with a vessel of poison clasped to his breast. Their life had almost ebbed away; their hearts were just beating and no more. The elder could barely speak; but he was able to summon up sufficient strength to tell his mother what had happened, after which he fell back gasping and died. The younger brother lingered on for three more days. As he lay dying he said to the Mun: "Mother! In our time we have poisoned many people; but, now we too must die. But you will still live on; and you are a Mun; you have powers denied to many."

Na-Sor understood what was expected of her, and after the second son's death she remained alone in meditation for

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

but later on a Mun appeared to him in a dream and told him what to do. Nowadays he always dreams before a ceremony, and thus learns what action he has to take. During the course of these dreams he speaks with Kings of Sikkim, Europeans, and all sorts of other people. Actually it is a demon who is speaking to him, but it has chosen to adopt this form. [756] [781]

Before becoming a Mun Gongyop was ill for nearly three years, and during all this time lay almost like dead, the symptoms being the same as with his previous illness. He was visited by both Mun and Lamas; and both divined that he was being troubled by the Mun's own private god; and that the only way he could recover was to make this god his own. Part of the ceremony was done by a Lama; but the most important part, known as *Rum-Keuk*, was done by a female Mun. An ox was slaughtered and part of its flesh, together with grain and butter, was offered to the gods by the Mun. She was offered five rupees in payment for her services; but refused to accept any money until Gongyop had completed his studies: she took only the head and two legs of the ox, together with its vital organs. These had formed the actual ceremonial offering. Gongyop did not understand the words she used during the ceremony as she spoke in a special esoteric language; but in any case he was so ill at the time that he could not even drag himself outside the house for the purposes of nature: he was unable to see properly; nor could he hear. He remained by her side during the ceremony and from time to time she waved things over him. Before the actual physical signs of his illness developed he became as one mad. He would wander aimlessly about without knowing where he was going: sometimes he went to other people's houses, and sometimes he would roam in the forest. He never knew what he was doing; nor did he afterwards remember where he had been. Sometimes he had the feeling that he could walk very fast, as though he was being transported on air. He believes that in this way he [782]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

the stick: this is the god arriving to take possession of his body. He is now no longer himself. The god takes up the necklace and puts it on its head. It gets up trembling and goes outside the house, where it walks up and down a few times. It comes in again and sits down in its former place. Everyone keeps very quiet and still; even the children make no noise. It offers *chi* and chants a little. Now it blows on everyone. Very quietly, it begins to speak. Soon, darkness comes over it, and it steals away. The god is gone, having made its prophecy. Gongyop recovers consciousness. Later, the others will tell him what the god has said.

A Mun offers sacrifices to Itpumu, who, as we have already seen, was the creator of all things, even of Lamas. The god cannot be approached direct, but only through the medium of his demon children. It sometimes happens that the twice-yearly ceremony, when prophecies are made, is performed by more than one Mun in each village: but even when this is done it is said that their prophecies do not differ in essentials; and apparently no steps are taken to prevent collusion. We were unfortunate not to witness one of these ceremonies; but from what little I have seen I think it is exceedingly doubtful if a real state of trance is ever induced. One or two people were openly sceptical, and said that the prophecies were made in such a low and indistinct voice that it was possible to interpret them almost as one wished: others, however, were reticent. There seems no doubt, however, that they are always confined to generalisations: "although the village is suffering from coughs and colds at present, there is no immediate danger, and the epidemic will shortly cease." Things such as this were commonly said, but they can hardly be called prophetic; and in the meantime I prefer to keep an open mind until such time as I have collected evidence which would be accepted by a scientist.

Gongyop says that during ordinary ceremonies, when no god has taken possession of his body, he sometimes sees phantom dogs, pigs, or monkeys coming into the room. If he looks carefully they disappear at once; but the moment he

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

755 fresh healthy complexion. I could hardly believe my eyes; but such is the nature of faith.

THE GO-SUM AND ITS MYTHOLOGY

THE FIGURE

778 The figure of the Go-sum is first built up roughly on a base of coarse grass and fastened to a small plank by means of a stick, on which it is impaled. The trimmings and anatomical details are added later, and are usually made of dough in order to make for easier working.

The central head, which is somewhat larger than the others, is that of a bull; that on the right a tiger; and the one on the left is a pig. All three are shown with open grinning mouths. In addition to the genital organs, as already described, the figure has female breasts and a large stylised [531] navel, the design of which represents a tortoise holding a magic square. This is said to represent the world. The Go-sum is also provided with a tail in the form of a snake, which lies in coils behind it. Behind the bull's head a single kite's feather is stuck, and the figure is decorated down both its sides with ordinary chickens' feathers. The latter have no significance, and it is said that "the creature was merely born like that." In the palm of each hand is a miniature *Torma*, and another is placed on top of the central head. Each of these is adorned with a dab of butter, which represents clothing and jewels. There is a similar dab on the end of the penis, put there to represent semen. Other dabs round the neck and arms are representative of necklaces and bracelets. On the back of the figure is a small cloth bag filled with grain. This is its food.

782 The ceremony demands the sacrifice of an ox. Since a Lama may not himself take life this is done by a Mun; but the Lama takes some of the blood and sprinkles it over the figure.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

possible*; and it might be a good thing to have a figure of a *Gedo* made and abandoned on the path. *Shemen Kyop* should certainly be done, in the near future, since this is clearly indicated. This consists in taking a picture of Tumsi and stuffing it inside the skull of a rat together with twelve small pieces of wood, to represent arrows, tied round it. This is then to be taken out and buried in the ground at the junction of two paths.

The following additional information was added for the benefit of Chano's child.

The child should not go to any house where people are quarrelling, and should particularly avoid places where corpses are being burnt: nor should she mix with people of low cast, such as Blacksmiths or Musicians! For the next few months she should also attend no wedding. She will be troubled by Mutnyam Chen, a demon which causes shooting pains, shortness of breath, and pains in the heart. The left shoulder will be particularly painful. She should not be present at the time cattle or bows and arrows are purchased; nor should she eat the flesh of any diseased animal. It would be better also not to allow her to play with knives. The reading of the following books will undoubtedly be beneficial: *Numchiya; Tukzung; Chozum; Numsa Numget; Chunjet*, and any others available.

The *Chenmo* ceremony also appears to be indicated, for which a bundle composed of a monkey's head, dog's head, and a piece of iron is necessary. The child will always be in some danger of dying, and the same may be said of its mother! At the present moment demons and gods are quarrelling amongst themselves for mastery of the child's body; and if the demons win she will surely die. For this reason good treatment is essential, or the child may suffer unnecessarily. If she lives until after November she will in

* The reading of books is very commonly prescribed, especially in Tibet. In order to get through the several bulky volumes within a reasonable time it is usual to call in a number of Lamas, each of whom reads aloud, but all at the same time, a different book or chapter for the benefit of the person concerned. This idea might well be incorporated into Western medicine: an order to read, for instance, the whole of *Chambers's Encyclopædia* might have a most salutary effect; provided, of course, that the patient did not hire others to do it for him!

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

754 trouble others, although of course he knows how to do it. The second Dorje Lopön, however, has often sent them; and by this means has actually caused the death of two people. On the first occasion he was still a pupil when a man came to his master and begged him to use his power to kill a certain person. The teacher thought it a good opportunity to see how his pupil progressed; he told him to have a shot at it, and see what happened. He did so; and in due course the man died. On the second occasion the Dorje Lopön had his knife stolen during some ceremony at the Monastery. He was very angry, but did not know who was the culprit. However, he sent a Mung to kill him; and when a man died shortly afterwards it was naturally believed that he was the thief.

Tafoor has himself learnt how to kill people; but "The State," so he says, "no longer permits the sending of devils for the purpose of causing people's death!" At the present time, in addition to himself, the two Dorje Lopöns are the only people in Lingtem who have the necessary skill. It is said that the first is still willing to exercise his powers on the quiet; but the second Dorje Lopön no longer does this [782] sort of thing: he went on a pilgrimage to Nepal some years ago and took an oath never in future to do it.

782 793 When a Lama is practising love magic on his own behalf it is only necessary for him to take a rosary in his hand and concentrate on the girl whose love he covets, as a result of which she will be unable to resist his advances. Should his power of concentration, however, be insufficient to produce the desired result, he has only to take a small stone or a lump of dirt, spit upon it and throw it at the girl. This is never known to fail.

When acting on behalf of others the Lama must be given a small piece of hair of each of the man and woman concerned. He twines these two pieces together and then concentrates on the couple, the hair being thrown away later without ceremony. This service costs one rupee; but a friendly Lama will often do it for nothing.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

The place selected for the ceremony was in a small 796
clearing below the monastery. It was at the junction of several paths; and was adorned with two long walls of inscribed stones and a number of prayer-flags raised on bamboo poles. From this vantage point one had an uninterrupted view in two directions: of Kinchinjunga to the west, and of the Tibetan peaks to the east. Early in the morning two rough field altars had been prepared, one facing towards Kinchinjunga, the other looking down the valley. On the latter altar offerings would be placed to the "demons of the plains," such as send in disease and pestilence from the outside world.

In a situation such as Lingtem it is natural that Kinchin- 823
junga, or Konchen as he is locally called, should be more 782
venerated than in places where the mountain is not visible. Perhaps because of this its worship forms an integral part of nearly every local ceremony, as in the present case; this, of course, is in addition to the religious celebrations in the mountain's honour which are held in the monastery on the fifteenth of every month, this day being sacred to the god.

"The mountain Kanchinjunga [*sic*], on the western border 823
of Tibet," notes Waddell, "is known to most visitors to Darjeeling and northern Bengal. This graceful mountain, second in height only to Everest,* was formerly in itself an object of worship, as it towers high above every other object in the country, and is the first to receive the rays of the rising sun and the last to part with the sunset. Kinchinjunga literally means 'the five repositories or ledges of the great snows' and is physically descriptive of its five peaks, the name having been given by the adjoining Tibetans of Tsang, who also worshipped the mountain. But the Sikkim saint, Lha-tsun Ch'embo, gave the name a mythological meaning,

* This was correct when Waddell wrote in 1894. Since then, however, Kinchinjunga (28,148 feet) has had to yield its place to K.2 (Mount Godwin Austen: 28,250 feet) in the Karakoram. It is now the third highest mountain in the world. The error has not, however, been noted in the 1934 edition of Waddell's book.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

play; and a father will want his son to work in the fields." [224] [868]

When a man starts to hunt he must on no account eat any of the flesh of the first hundred animals he kills, unless by any chance he shoots them with a gun, in which case it does not matter. After killing a hundred animals the hunter will [826] find that he has acquired a slight hollow in his right shoulder-blade; and when this appears it is an indication that he need no longer observe this prohibition, the disregard of which is [763] thought to cause body sores and even leprosy. In the meantime the young hunter will hand his game over to friends and relations, who in return will give him chickens and eggs.

Pong Rum is the master of all animals, and for this reason [776] he is the patron saint of hunters. Once every year, generally in October, all hunters make a sacrifice to this god. Parched [782] rice, *chi*, fish, wild birds' flesh, ginger, arum, sugar-cane, banana, and some sticks of wormwood are offered to the god, and it is important that no woman should take any part in their preparation: nor, if possible, should she even know that they are being got ready, or the hunter will have no luck during the forthcoming year. There is no actual ceremony, the hunter merely taking all these articles and depositing them in some place in the forest where the god will see them.

In addition to this annual sacrifice, every time a hunter kills an animal or bird it is usual to singe its entrails and leave them as an offering to Pong Rum. Whenever a wild animal or bird is killed the god is always present and can be heard; he sounds like a stone whistling through the trees. As soon as this noise is heard the hunter will put the animal on the ground and offer it to the god, speaking very slowly and distinctly; but he leaves only the burned entrails behind. On his return home he should take care that no woman sees the animal's head, or it means that he will be unlucky next time he goes out hunting.

A man who goes in for hunting bears makes a kind of bamboo spring, which he fastens into a tree. If the bear treads on this it is at once precipitated into a pit below,

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950)1951
AK5 Lepcha AK5

6. THE GYAPCHI KLON CEREMONY

This complicated ceremony is carried out concurrently by lamas and Mun priests in order to free a sick person from the evil influence of certain spirits, the presence of which was recognized by divination. As this rite has already been described elsewhere,[37] only the image used and the various thread-crosses will be described.

During this ceremony, five images are made of buck-wheat dough and placed in front of an altar-like structure. Four of the effigies, said to represent male spirits, are depicted alike, that is standing, with raised hands; some scratches in the dough indicate that they are wearing a garment. The names of these four supernatural beings are Chyong moong, Deut moong, Lho moong and Sher moong. Their respective colours, rendered in the same order, are green, red, yellow and white. The fifth image is that of Mamoo moong, a female supernatural being whom we encountered previously. Her image is black and she is portrayed with legs apart, the sexual organs greatly exaggerated. Behind each of the images, a *yeu* of the respective colour is planted, together with two *tamsing* and two sticks with tufts of wool.

Another image, used in this rite, is called the "house owner". It is surrounded by small butter discs displaying images, impressed with wooden printing blocks (the Tibetan *Zan par*). Some of these depict the supernatural beings who preside over the cycle of twelve years.[38] The image of the "house owner" is connected with one *yeu*, two *tamsing* and two *pong*. The thread-cross used in this case is multi-coloured.

7. RITUAL, PERFORMED BY A LAMA TO APPEASE THE FEVER DEVIL DEUT-MOONG

After reading prayers, the lama, using bamboo sticks and blue thread, constructs a thread-cross, which is called *moong-ka deu bitomu*. After placing various sorts of grain, leaves, some fried rice and bread into the *deu*, he makes

5:Nebesky-Wojkowitz and Gorer E,J-5 (1937, 1950) 1951
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a small image, which is afterwards connected with the thread-cross. Then the whole structure is offered to Deut-moong and finally somebody, who was designated by the lama, has to take this offering to a place in the forest where it is left to be eaten by animals. This ritual also corresponds to the ancient Tibetan *lTo* rites previously mentioned.[1] In this connection it is interesting to note, that also in Tibet leaves or pieces of paper are placed in the thread-cross, usually in such a manner as to form the main features of a face. Occasionally a ceremonial scarf (*Kha btags*) is draped over the *mDos*.

8. RITE FOR AVERTING INFANTILE DIARHOEA

If several children die of infantile diarhoea, it is assumed that their death was caused by a malignant spirit, called Sande moong. The Lepchas know two ceremonies for appeasing his anger. For the first a black dog is made with a rider on its back and two *yeu*, a black and a white one are placed upon the dog's head, while a red thread-cross is planted behind the rider.

The second ceremony has already been described elsewhere.[39] In this ceremony a life-sized cat with a very long tail is made out of dough. A rider, sitting upon a horse's saddle is placed on its back and four images of men are put in front of and behind the cat. The animal is led by strands of coloured thread, wound around its neck and held by the rider and the images in front. The rider carries a red thread-cross; on the left-front side of the tray a white *Yue* is placed, on the right front a black one, on the right hand rear a white and on the rear left a yellow. To each *Yeu* a *Tamsing* with wool of the same colour as the thread-cross is added.

9. EXORCISM, CALLED DEUT SHAGU KYOB

For curing a person who has fallen ill through the influence of an evil spirit called Hlamen Djeme Pum, a

[1] [See cat. 116 p 78. - Analyst]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
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that is the case I will no longer stay with you." Henceforth he wandered alone until he came to a plain where he made his abode.[48]

According to another legend, man springs from a pair of deities or from deified ancestors. The above-mentioned Tak-bo-thing and Nazong-ngyu belong to the category of these deified ancestors. The old woman, Han-bu-ni, who is Mun and Andshemu told me this, "Sa-dzug-rum is the god of heaven and the sun. His wife is Gor-song-mu, that is the mother of Gor-song, because she has a son by that name. She also has a daughter. Sa-dzug-rum is like a father and mother of mankind. I offer sacrifices to him three times each year after the rice, corn and millet harvests. The animal most suitable for the sacrifice is the pig. The next best is the bullock or cow, and the goat ranks last. The pig is killed by piercing its heart from under the shoulder-blade. The cattle are killed by a blow with an axe on the back of the neck. The goats have their throats cut.

Another pair of deities are Kang-chen-rum, who lives in Himal, and his wife, Nyo-lig-rum, who lives in the sea. They have two children; the son, Dju-kōb, and the daughter, Bi-kōb. But the highest of all these gods is Sa-dzug-rum."

Thus this old Mun and Andshemu regards Sa-dzug-rum as their Supreme God, and believes that he has a wife. She however disagrees about calling Gor-song the first man. She also denies that Dju-kōb and Bi-kōb were the ancestral parents of the tribe. However she was unable to give us the names of the first men.

Sa-liang, the son and pupil of the famous Bong-thing Ong-di, contradicted her and related the following, "The Supreme God is Sa-dzug-rum. He has no wife, but four assistants. These are the four spirits who bring discord and pain into the world. They have therefore to be appeased by sacrifices performed twice a year. Sa-dzug-rum is not the god of creation. Rather, it is Rum who is the god of creation. He it was who created the first human beings, Ti-gung and Ni-gung. For a while they were serenely happy and were free from anxiety and suffering. Later they sinned, and as a

48. cfr. a similar myth quoted above p. 7.

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opinion that Rum has no wife. But other names used for the Supreme God are expressive of the belief that he had a wife. Han-bo-ni Mun said, "Sa-dzug-rum has a wife by the name of Gor-song-mu." Sa-liang, son of the Bong-thing Ong-di, contradicts this statement, "Sa-dzug-rum has no wife, but he has four help-mates. These are the four spirits who cause disquite and unrest in the world. They have to be appeased by sacrifices which we perform twice a year. Sa-dzug-rum is not the god of creation, which took place through another god."

Stocks writes, "It appears that there were five original deities: It-mo and her husband Pa-sandi, their children, Nazong-gnyu and Takbo-thing and Tashe-thing, the son of the former. In these creative power is attributed to the female deities, It-mo and Nazong-gnyu (note 1). The latter (Pasandi) is only mentioned once, and as apparently there is much confusion between the functions of him and of his son, Takbo-thing, it would be difficult to establish his real nature."[53] The same co[illegible]on exists between Ta-she-thing and Tak-bo-thing. We may note however that a female deity, contrary to the belief of Gorer, is never regarded as a Supreme Being. Gorer considers It-bo-mo to be female,[54] but we have seen that It-bo or Ayit-bo means the god of creation. The Dān-si Bong-thing from Ka-far says, "In the beginning there was only the God, RUM. He had no special name. The demons Mung were non-existent at the time. Then came the first pair of deities, Agek-rum and Alat-rum, the god and goddess of procreation. Then too, there existed Ta-she-thing and Tak-bo-thing. There was besides, It-bo and his wife De-bo. It-bo was the god of creation who created the first man, Ti-gung-tik." We did not come across the concept of a goddess as the Highest Being in all the Lepcha mythology, but we found certain very definite evidences of the belief that the Supreme God has a wife (cfr. genealogy of God p. 60).

Another important god is Pum-rum, the god of the hunters. He is also called, among other names, Dju-thing or Pong-rum. Dju-thing is honoured as a threefold being. In the highest

53. op. cit. p. 227.
54. op. cit. p. 226.

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776 mountain regions he is called Mo-nom-dju, for it is he who leads
224 the chamois and the wild [illegible] Mo-nom, to the hunters. In the lower hills he is called de-go-bu-log-dju and delivers up stag, bears and other game. In the lower plains he is called Se-wing-dju, or the one who helps capture the game of the plains. Gom-shi and Gom-yu-rum are hunting gods and it is they who instil in the hunters the passion for hunting. The god of the hunters is worshipped exclusively by the men and the women do not in any way participate in the worship. We shall consider the details of this sacrifice at a later stage.
[773 The Rong claim that "Rum-zong-pa-no gave them bows,
226] arrows and knives and taught them how to shoot fish."

776 The wife of Rum-zong-pa-no is Na-li-pun-di who ins-
[773] tructed the women in the arts of farming, weaving and taught them housework and the use of the sickle. Sa-dju is another god venerated as god of agriculture. If a housewife who
[781] is possessed by Sa-dju dies, the spirit continues to possess one of her daughters even though the daughter may have in the meanwhile left the family through marriage. This deity appears to the women in dreams in the guise of an old man.
[787] If the apparition has a large goitre it augurs well for a rich harvest. If on the other hand it has no goitre at all it omens a bad harvest.

● 782 We already know from myths related earlier, that the
776 Lepchas were given the first seeds by higher beings. These seeds were gaguni, which has the appearance of a millet-like maize; sama, a kind of white millet; goya, dry rice, and mokai, red maize. The dog plays an important role in the obtaining of rice and hence the Rong give, each time, some
[231] portion of the rice they eat to the dog. We have noticed how, after a meal of rice, the remnants are scattered on the floor, and the dogs, which otherwise are not allowed inside the house, came in and ate the rice. The sacrifice to the god of agriculture is usually offered by the housewife. Nevertheless the man can offer the sacrifice if for some grave reason the woman is unable to do so. Man is not altogether excluded from the performance of the sacrifice, as is the case with the women in the sacrifice to the god of the hunters.

776 The family or household god is Rum-fat, who is the protector of domestic animals. The two gods of procreation,

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773 and sisters, the Himalaya Mountains, and the lakes and all
776 the rivers, in order that he might become a Bong-thing to
793 help the humans against the evil spirits.

And the child asked It-mo what would be the best things to carry with him on the journey, and the Creator gave him some ginger (salep), some garlic (paki-mun-gu) and a tree, the fruit of which he could place on a stick and burn slowly
[778] like a lamp (the safi-kun). And all these things are used externally and internally by the Bong-thing today, and from all these plants and bulbs medicine is made.

Taking all these bulbs the son came to the Lung-tun-parten tableland in the Himalayas but he found that the Mung had already come to that place; they had, indeed, spread over the whole country; they were in all the mountains and in all the trees and in all the caves. So he said to them, 'I was sent to go round the world, but you seem to be everywhere before me, so I will return to the Creator.'

[783 But when he turned and was leaving the Mung caught
782] hold of him saying, 'On one condition we will do everything you command;—when we worry the human beings with disease and illness we will go away and leave them in peace if, in return, you will give us some fowls, eggs, pigs or any other animals.' The Bong-thing said, 'You force me to do this. Only swear you will leave all human beings in peace. I will call my brothers Sakbri-bu and Sahnang-bu to act as witnesses.' To this they all agreed and at the Partam-Sakber, the Mung swore that when they worried human persons with illness they would leave the sick person in peace were the Bong-thing do attend to the patient, and propitiate them, the Mung, by giving them offerings of a cow, a pig or of several goats. To make doubly sure, the Bong-thing asked the Mung to swear by spitting on a rock there, which they did, and so great was the oath that it shattered the rock to pieces. And again he asked them to swear and spit in the lake which they did; but the oath was so great that it caused the lake to dry up. Yet once more he asked them to swear by spitting on a tree which they did; but the tree could not bear the weight of the oath and it fell. This was the covenant between the Bong-thing and the Mung and we, the Rong folk, believe this is the origin of the Bong-thing.....And when

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793 The Han-bu-ai from Git-biyong gives us a rather detailed report of her initiation. "My maternal grandmother was a Mun. At the age of nine I fell ill and commenced speaking [757 a variety of languages. The people said, 'It is the spirit of 775] her grandmother, the Mun let, who speaks through her.' So my parents summoned a Bong-thing who performed the sacrifice of initiation, offering a bullock, a pig and a goat. Thereafter I was apprenticed to a female Mun for a period of three years during which time I was taught the prayers, the traditions and the ceremonies. After the completion of my apprenticeship the sacrifice was renewed. I was given full powers and began to sacrifice independently. Should [782] I desire to conjure up my spirit, I offer chi, butter, and incense in sacrifice and the spirit quickly responds to my summons to appear. I notice at first a blurred object, like a cloud of dust approaching me. My heart tells me that the spirit is near."

This woman, who is over eighty years of age today, and is Mun as well as Andshemu, has recently become a [797] Christian. We asked her whether the old spirit did not harass her for having given up her former priesthood and ceased to honour it. "Not at all. The spirit does not torment me in the least," she replied. Later she proudly said to the Lepchas, "It is my privilege to instruct this great European priest who comes from China and Tibet, in the teachings of the Mun and the Bong-thing." She was very pleased to find us interested in the old traditions. She knew a little Tibetan, and loved to converse with us in that language.

796 A Rong woman, whose father and brother are both Bong-thing, has narrated to us the following story, "In the evening my father drank chi. This made him excited [535] and he danced through the night. Very often three more Bong-thing came to our house and they all danced together. That is customary with the Mun and the Bong-thing. In the neighbourhood there are three women and two men who hold their dances by turns in each other's houses. This dance festival must take place at least three times a year; —in April at the barley harvest; in September at the first [778 millet harvest, and finally in October at the second millet 782] harvest. Torma (Tibetan expression for sacrificial images)

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of rice and butter are in the first instance brought forward. These are offered with little roasted birds, fish, incense and chi, and in addition a rupee in money. Prior to the actual offering, garlands of flowers are prepared and hung up in the house. The flowers are called "Sa-gi." "Amial" means garlands, and it is from these that the festival derives its name "Sa-gi-sa-amial." The god of power is also called "Sa-gi." "Sa-gi-fat" means sacrifice and annual festival. After the performance of the sacrifice the men and women begin to dance, and during the dance they sometimes fall to the ground and twitch and tremble. They are then lifted up and continue with the dance. The onlookers keep watch to ensure that none of the dancers escapes from the room. The spirit of my father who is now dead has passed over to my brother, Sa-hō."

Next comes the actual vocation. This always takes place during an illness when the physical powers of the patient are at a low ebb. We had the opportunity of observing the case of a girl who was, however, not a Lepcha but a Kami. The sequence of events is nonetheless identical. The child is said to be possessed by a Limbu spirit and at such times she speaks the Limbu language. The people, therefore, insist that she must become a soothsayer. The girl gets epileptic fits and froths at the mouth. The nerves are upset and distraught and the people see in all this a case of possession by the spirit. The girl still is with her parents and prays each day at definite times to the spirit and renders it homage. At a later stage the girl is brought to a teacher ; not however to a Lepcha teacher, but to a Nepalese magician, since a Lepcha will not teach a member of another tribe.

All those who receive this summons from the spirit must necessarily answer the summons and go to a teacher who will give them the required initiation, instruction, practices, and teach them the prayers. A great sacrifice, mentioned by the Han-bu-ni Mun above, has to be performed by way of initiation. Gorer describes this ceremony as follows, "In the house a little table is set up. On it to the right lies a scarf of honour with a rupee. In the middle is a wooden vessel which is filled with chi and garnished with butter round the rim. On the right is a stone incense-burner filled with Tibetan

incense, and dry twigs from the cypress tree. In front of the little table is a winnower on which parts of the animal sacrifices are arranged in the following manner: opposite the vessel is the skull turned towards the table. Behind it are the entrails. To the left of the skull is a hind leg, to the front is a foreleg. Between the foreleg and the entrails is a thigh with a little meat. When everything is arranged, the teacher sits behind the table a little to the left, in front of the scarf. His pupil sits on his right. Then he lays the scarf on the pupil's hand and recites the prayers, which the apprentice repeats after him sentence by sentence. Then the master makes a ceremonial speech to the initiated in which he explains: 'Now the price for the freeing of your body is paid to the demon, but under one condition, that you consecrate your life to the Mun-god, and that you offer up your body as his dwelling place.' After this speech he hands the vessel filled with the chi to his pupil so that he can drink from it three times from three different places. This drinking of the chi from the vessel garnished with butter stands for the actual ritual consecration. With this the pupil is bound for three years to study with his master. At the end of the instruction, a second sacrifice of a bullock is performed. With this the pupil is given full powers and can function independently.

The most important sacrificial offering for all these ceremonies is the bullock. An ox is desirable. If a pig is given the neophite will be unable to expel Lom-doon-moong (the devil of Jaundice). If a goat, he will be unable to expel Mat-moong, (the devil who produces various unpleasant symptoms which are the results of ancestral quarrels)."[58]

According to our investigations, the Mun and the Bong-thing are both equally powerful magicians. They only, can expel demons and appease the gods through sacrifice. Both, men as well as women, can be Mun. The Mun spirit is not a female spirit but can choose either men or women as its servants. The Bong-thing can only be a man. The Mun and the Bong-thing whom we were able to observe, do not wear any special ceremonial dress or ornaments during their activities, neither do they use the double skull-drum (damaru)

58. op. cit. p. 479.

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is received. If the teacher is a black magician, he teaches the black arts. It therefore has nothing to do with the Mun spirit who would be from the very beginning an evil being. This entirely contradicts the ancient tradition of the Mun and the Bong-thing who were established as mediators between God and men and as the protectors of men against the machinations of the demons. To this date the Mun and the Bong-thing have preserved these old traditions.[56]

The spirits of the Mun and the Bong-thing do not always live in their mediums, but they stay in a place called Tiamtan, as we learned above. They come down from there only when they are summoned. They take complete possession of their mediums only two or three times each year, particularly at the time of the festivals of the great sacrifices. At other times the mediums do not fall into a total trance. As we did not have the opportunity of observing such a trance personally, we repeat the description as given by Gorer, "When they come down, the vessel which receives them feels as though bowed down by a heavy weight.

The Moon only takes possession of this vessel twice a year, once in the hot season, and once in the wet season. This is a big ceremony and elaborate sacrifices are made. The day before the sacrifices I start feeling ill; I feel heavy and pressed down and cannot bear any noise. I tremble constantly and I am covered with sweat. I pray to the gods to let me off, and I offer the chi and incense in preparation for them to wait for the true sacrifices. The next day the ceremony is held inside a house and many people are present. I sit down cross-legged in front of the offerings. Besides the ordinary offerings there is a wreath of flowers and a flower bedecked stick. When I sit opposite these I feel a heavy burden pressed over my shoulders and as if my flesh is being poked with sticks—zinga-zinga-zinga-zinga; suddenly a sort of darkness comes over my eyes, it is as if I was in a sort of dream so that I know, see and remember nothing. But from what other people have told me and from what I have seen when other Mun have prophesied I know what takes place; I put on the flower necklace and take up the stick and go and

56. Cfr. Gorer, op. cit. p. 220 sq.

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793
796 walk in the courtyard. (Were anybody else to put on the neck-
[84] lace on me the gods would be angry, and the rash man would receive the burden of the gods.) When I return everybody is hushed even the children.

I blow into each person's face and on the offering; [787] then I scatter chi and prophecy in a loud and audible voice the things which are going to take place in the following half year. After the prophecy, I recover consciousness; but not till cock crow next day do I feel all right again.

755 When I am called in the case of an illness, the god does not fully enter me but I see the devil which is attacking the sick person either in the form of some animals or insect or person, depending on which devil it is. Thus Lum-dong-
[776 mong appears in a pig, Sor-moog as a dirty ragged old woman,
787] Arot-moong as a red butterfly. I see these visions out of the corner of my eye; if I look directly there is nothing there. But I watch these devils carefully out of the corner of my eye; if they go away without eating anything the patient will recover quickly; but if they take food the patient will probably die though I only tell him that the illness is very serious."[89] (fig. 19.)

(h) The Sacrifices of the Mun and the Bong-thing

755 We had the opportunity of being present at and observing
782 the sacrifice for a sick woman, by the Lha-ba Bong-thing (who is also a Pau). This sacrifice is called Mung-zug-fat. Mung-zug means "to cast out demons"; "fat" is sacrifice. To start with, all the things necessary for the sacrifice are kept in readiness. The Torma of rice and butter are arranged. The chi containers are filled, the butter-lamps are put up; incense and holy water are kept ready. A bullock is then brought near the front door of the house. A rope is tied to its right horn and the other end of the rope is taken into the house, and the sick woman is asked to hold it in her hand. The Bong-thing then comes near the ox and says, "Instead of the life of the woman, take the life of the ox. I am giving you the life of this ox in lieu of the life of this woman. His

89. op. cit. p. 220 sq.

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life is of greater value than hers. Take it! The body and soul of the ox are greater than those of this person. Take them! Leave the people in peace." As he says this he offers chi, rice and butter, laying these three sacrificial gifts on the forehead of the animal. Then, he says with greater emphasis, "The body and the soul of this animal must be sacrificed." The ox is then killed by the blow of an axe on the nape of its neck. Any one except a woman, can perform the actual killing; for if a woman were to kill the animal it would be a terrible misfortune and no one would be allowed to eat the meat. The head of the ox is then severed from the body and the body is carved up. The legs are taken off, the entrails and the internal organs are drawn out, the head is taken off, the thorax is divided vertically into two, and the loins with the tail are dissected.

The first part of the sacrifice is performed in front of the house near the door. Except for the head, loins, tail and the entrails, the left side of the animal is sacrificed to the demons. From the more valuable parts, *e.g.* the heart, liver, spleen, kidneys and lungs, only very small pieces are taken away for the sacrifice to the demons. The Torma for about fourteen demons are placed on a little table; for Ge-be-mung, Techö-mung (the fever-demon), Tsang-dog-mung (the demon who causes stiffness in the limbs), Me-sun-mung (the life-spirit), Mög-nyan-mung, Ka-so-mu, Me-mu and others whose names we could not ascertain. It is believed that the demons are appeased through this sacrifice, that they leave the sick person and come no more into the house.

The second part of the sacrifice takes place inside the house. The right side of the animal together with the head, the more valuable parts, the entrails, the loins and the tail are ranged in the following manner: In the large room a little distance away from the fire place, the skin of the animal is spread on the floor with its hairy side down, and the tail end nearest the fire place. Over this the skull is laid at the head end, with the snout pointing to a little table which is placed against the wall opposite to the fireplace. A little behind the skull the fore and the hind legs are placed on the right and left side of it. In between the legs are laid the breast bones, the loins, the tail, entrails and the valuable parts. These cover

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up the entire skin. The blood is not used at all. On the little table that is against the wall the Tormas are deposited and in front of them the two butter-lamps. The order of the Tormas is as follows: (See the drawing figs. 20 & 21) 1. Rum-thing-bo-a-mu, the wife of the supreme God. 2. Rum-thing-bo-a-bo, the Supreme God. 3. Nyom, the daughter-in-law. 4. Rum-thing-bo-ta-gri-kŏb, the son of the Supreme God. 5. San-tug-kan-dro-mu (San-tug is a place below Algara; Kan-dro-mu is evidently like the Tibetan bKa-gro-ma, a sky fairy.) 6. Don-dyŏ-chi-log, another spirit who personifies both the intoxicating drinks, dyŏ and chi. Each of these six deities has on either side of it two servants who are called Bya-ro. Torma number 2, which represents the Supreme God, is the largest. It is about five inches high, of oval shape and is decorated with ten small lumps of butter as is shown in the drawing. Torma number 1, the wife, is smaller, being about four inches high and round in shape with the same decorations of butter. Tormas number 3 to 6 are similar to number 1, except that they are three inches high only. In front of this row are three Ka to, Tormas number 7, 8 & 9. In a squarish socket five cone shaped objects are placed. These are perhaps symbolical of the five-peaked mountain, but we could find out nothing more definite about them. Torma number 10 is a deity, Ka-to-sam or Gon-hiu-so. It is about two inches high, conical in shape, and decorated with streaks of butter. The Tormas of the Bya-ro servants are all alike, a little smaller and devoid of decorations. Before the table on which are placed the Tormas and the butter-lamps, there are five bamboo vessels and a wooden cup filled with chi. The cup, which stands fourth from the left, has its rim decorated with three little lumps of butter and is called San-dyŏ. We notice here again the names "chi" and "dyŏ" borne by the sixth deity. In front of these vessels there is a second small table, and six piles of rice placed on six banana leaf-plates lie on it. On top of each pile of rice are deposited a rib of the sacrifice and tiny pieces of the heart, liver, lung, spleen and kidneys. The number SIX is therefore a standard,—there are six principal gods, six chi containers, six piles of rice and six pieces of meat.

A banana leaf-plate containing rice is placed behind the skin on which the pieces of sacrificial flesh had been placed.

[Text continues on p. 63]

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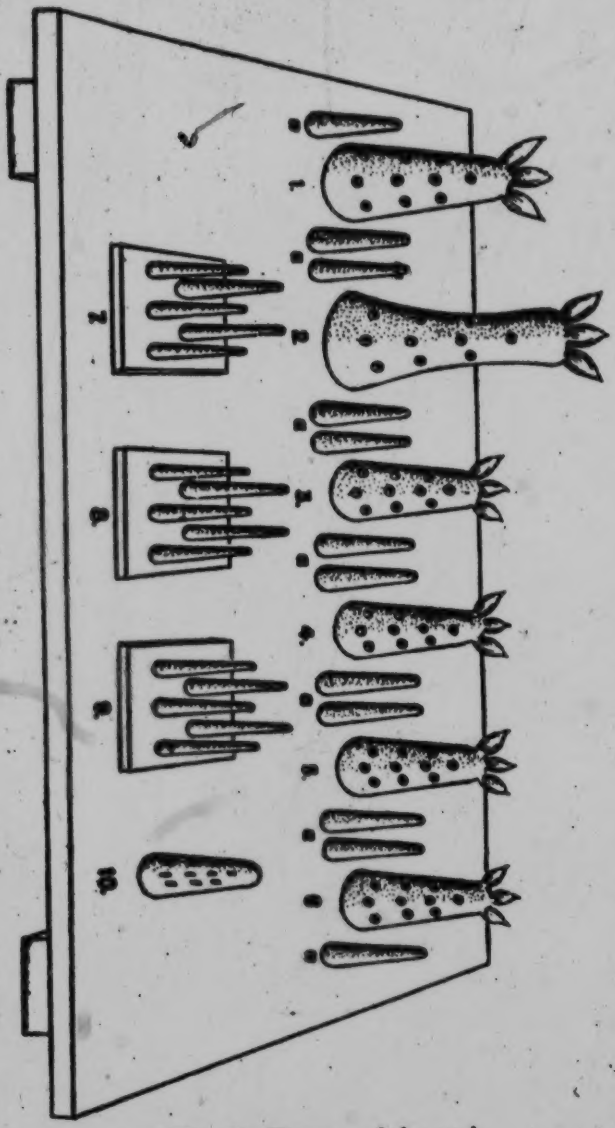

Fig. 20, Tormas of the gods

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Fig. 21, The cattle sacrifice

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On the right side of this plate is an earthenware pot filled with water. The Bong-thing sits in front of the sacrifice with his back to the fire. Beside him is an assistant holding a brazier with incense. The incense consists of dried twigs from the cypress trees of Tibet. The Lepchas call the tree "dag-dŏl-gung." The priest takes in his right hand the "purifier" which is made out of three branches of Amliso, *i.e.* Po-chior. He then summons the god and when the branches move to and fro, it is a sign that the spirit has come. Now the Bong-thing begins the sacrificial prayer, "Sang so (incense is burnt); tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno! (Incense offering! Tibetan name—magic formula, praying it, holy water is to be sprinkled from the pitcher; it appears to be corrupt Tibeta tzab, which is the same as chab, signifying water.)

"To the star god, the Gun dŏ god, the sun god, the Sam yig god, the Sog god, the Gŏm shi god, the Gŏm yu god (I make) this offering of incense. The offering (I make) in the smoke of incense. Come hither O gods! Gold Torma and money Torma I offer in sacrifice. Come hither Ka to and Gon hiu. I offer in sacrifice. Spirit of the millet beer—and spirit of the rice offering come hither. The sacrifice is offered, the incense offering is made. tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno (magic formula). Goddess Amu mŏn mu, Ha mu, Mi lig mu, Miă song mu, Chu mu, Yuk mu, Se mu; son Chu go ri go chen chen, daughter-in-law Nyom mu, father and mother! [60]

60. sa her rum bu gun dŏ rum bu sa dzug rum bu sam yig rum bu
(to the) star god, Gun dŏ god, sun god, Sam yig god,

sog rum bu gŏm shi rum bu gŏm yu rum bu sang blong ga
Sog god, Gŏm shi god, Gŏm yu god, offering of incense

pă blong ga! (incense is offered here) kŏg ma o! dyăr pa dong, gom pa
in smoke, incense offering, in smoke! come here! Gold Torma, money

dong dzăn dong dăm dong hiu o! Ka to gon chiu blong ga! dzăn dong
Torma sacrifice! sacrifice! Ka to and Gon hiu come here! sacrifice,

hiu dăm dong hiu ma o. Chi log so log
sacrifice! Millet beer(spirit), rice offering (spirit)

blong ga dzăn dong hiu dăm dong hiu o! ŏn sang so! sang so!
come here! sacrifice! sacrifice! Incense offering, incense offering!

tza ni bu tza lo! tzab den bu geno! Amu mŏn mu, ha mu, mi lig mu,
(Magic formula while water is sprinkled) (All are names for the wife of

miă song mu, chu mu, yuk mu, se mu; chu go ri go chen chen bu
the God). (Name of the son of the Supreme God)

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776 I offer the smoke of incense. Come hither! To the father and to
755 the mother I offer gold Torma, I offer money Torma; I offer,
782 I offer, I offer incense to San tug kan dro mu; come hither!
I offer incense; come hither! I offer to Chi, the millet beer spirit, to the rice offering spirit, to Dyö, the millet beer spirit; come hither! Verify this, O God, that we are sick. Come hither and tell it; come here and say it. How the head is racked with pain, the loins ache, the body, the hands, the feet are paining and the belly is aching, this O God verify. Come hither and state it. How the demons bite that examine ye gods; come here and tell it. In this manner I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person. As a substitute for the body and the soul I offer this bull. I offer this substitute of life; I sacrifice this bound bull as a substitute for the body. I sacrifice this bound bull to Ge bu."[60a]

[539] 60a. nyom mu — (Daughter-in-law of the Supreme God). yab yum pong — Father, mother (Tibetan names for the whole family of the God.)

sang blong ga kög ma o ! yab yum dyär pa dong
I offer smoke of incense ! Come here ! To Father, Mother I offer gold Torma.

som pa dong dzän dong hiu fat ma o
I offer money Torma, I offer ! I offer !

San tug kan dro mu sang blong ga kög gad mao.
To San tug Kan dro mu offer of incense ! Come here !

plö blong ga kög gad mao !
offer of incense, come here !

chi log so log sang dyö ma djin blong ga
Millet beer (spirit), Rice offer (spirit), Millet beer (spirit) offer !

kög gad mao go yu song dog non rum dyop ga plö buo dön ga
Come here ! That we are sick, examine this O God now. Come here and tell us.

plö buo sareb song adyak non
Come here and say it. How the head aches,

achyang dog non me so dog non a go a tong dog
the loins pain, the body pains, hands and feet pain,

ta bak dog a yu rum pong dyop ga plö buo !
the belly aches. O God examine these things. Come here and tell it.

an sareb song mung nöng tzug bang ga rum dyop ga plö buo
How the demons bite examine that ye gods. Come here and tell it.

alom bö mad big djäk chim yu re söm
In this way I sacrifice this bound bull for the sick person.

me sö löm sa lo löm big bu
As a body substitute, as a soul substitute I sacrifice this bull.

sok löm bu me sö löm
I sacrifice this substitute of life, as a body substitute

big djäk bu mo Ge bu long big long djäk bu mo.
this bound bull I sacrifice. To the Ge bu, this bull, this bound bull I sacrifice."

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During the prayer, the one who performed the sacrifice added the expression "lang nam" in chosen places; it means "the year of the bull," because the sick person was born in the year of the bull. Lang is the Tibetan expression for the Zodiac bull. As the prayer ended, the assistant took some of the sacrificial meat, rice and chi and offered it to Me-sum-mung, the demon who represents the life-principle.

And so the sacrifice came to an end. The portions of meat were cleared away. The fore and hind legs and the valuable parts were given to the priest. The remainder of the meat, as also the skin, were sold in order to enable the family to make a little money. A very small portion of the meat was eaten immediately after the sacrifice. These sacrifices involve a heavy expenditure for the family; often many sacrifices are offered for the same illness if it is protracted, and this causes the ruin of many people. Hence many prefer to invite the lamaistic monks of the Brug-pa sect, because they are willing to drive out demons of illness at lesser expense.

A female Mun, Mai-li-mo-la-dza-ni, whose personal name is Chin-dün, and who lives near Git-biyong described a similar sacrificial ceremony to us which she holds at the ripening of the millet crop. The preparatory arrangements for the sacrifice are the same as mentioned above, with the following differences: There are only five Tormas for the five deities namely: Sa-dzug-rum, the sun god who is regarded as the Supreme Being, Ni-gung-mön, his wife, Ta-dik-köb, the son, Nyom, the daughter-in-law, and San-tug-kan-dro-mu. There are again two lamps, but five bamboo containers containing chi, five banana leaves with rice, five varieties of meat, and incense, and holy water containers. She is helped by her personal spirits who are Darmit, Dartik, Sang-mu, Dang-mu-rum, Asog-rum, Tzang-rum. The sacrifice progresses in the same sequence as above. This Mun was twenty years old when she fell ill with heart trouble. The Bong-thing A-du said to her, "You must become Mun." She was an apprentice to the female Mun Dja-ge-mo. In addition to her Mun belief, she also practises Lamaism, and has a little prayer wheel and prayer cord. We could not obtain the text of the prayers used in her sacrifice.

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755 782 776 From the Gu-gu Bong-thing we procured the text of another prayer said during the sacrifice of a sick person: "Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō, Gom shi, Gom yu gods! (invocation). The earth was created, the water was created, the whole world was created. The millet beer offering chi and the rice offering so were created. The Tōg bu ta she was created. Come hither, ye spirits. For the benefit of the creatures, of the world, and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this manner. Against suffering and harm I sacrifice. For myself I sacrifice. To the house-hold gods I sacrifice. As it has been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation, so must we sacrifice. Then to the deities of this house (of the sick man), to the Great God of the aTzam sacrifice, to the gods [774] of the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man), to the Darmit[61]

[539] 61. Fa dong dju fa dong dō
Fa dong dju and Fa dong dō (names for the male and female family gods: dong is the tribal name; dju is the male Himalayan mountain spirit; dō is the female spirit, that comes from the river).

gem shi gom yu rum lyang it ung it
Gom shi and Gom yu gods! The earth was created, the water was created,

lyang sōg dōm it chi log so log it
the whole world was created. Millet beer offering, rice offering were created.

lyang tōg bu ta she it ga.
Then Tōg bu ta she was created. (This is Tak bo thing or Ta she thing so often mentioned, who was the first man or the son of the Supreme God Ta she thing.)

plō sog dōm long ming
Come here! (invitation to the spirits). For the creature's interests of the

dam ga son dōn dog ga alom sug bam
whole world and of the whole existing creation I sacrifice in this manner.

adog anot sa pe ka sug bam
Against suffering and harm I sacrifice.

ga do sug to bam rum dar ngag to bam
For myself I sacrifice also. To the household gods I sacrifice at once.

yang ayit plō nōng
Likewise as it has been handed down from the beginning of earth's creation

sug gad bam along do do li rum
thus must we make sacrifice. Now to the deities of this house, to the

atzam athing rum
Great God of the aTzam sacrifice (aTzam sacrifice is the name of the sacrifice which is laid on the bull's forehead, as we saw above),

mung gung maa la rum pong darmit rum pong
to the soul and the life-spirit (of the sick man) gods, Darmit gods,

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and the Dartik gods, to the water and the flood gods, to all the gods together I sacrifice now. To our life-spirits and soul gods, to Darmit, the god of life's destiny, to Alat and Ayek, the gods of procreation, to the benefactors of the souls, to the gods who lend the strength of life, I must sacrifice, since I know how to do so. The god of my personal destiny is witness; if I do not sacrifice—then may a long illness come. But if I do know how to perform the right sacrifice—that is a godly thing. If I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice but sacrifice, that is a devilish thing. If I do not perform the right sacrifice—then may the demons come here. In this manner, O Ayek and Alat, come to this spot here. Traitors shall we be to the ancestral gods if we, the descendants, sacrifice in this (wrong) way. Thus we sacrifice (rightly) as is our duty. As our ancestors did—so do we honour (the gods) We, the living, set on this spot(bull's head) millet beer and[61].

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61a. dartik rum pong
Dartik gods (both are supposed to be female and male messengers, who bring news to the priest who performs the sacrifice; they are familiar deities of the Lepchas)

ung fat ung ghum rum pong aug ngag la bum
to the water and the flood gods, to them altogether I sacrifice now.
dō dō dumu hi dumu nyong rum pong khing tsung darmit rum pong
Our own life-spirits and soul gods, god of life's destiny, Darmit,
ayek alat rum pong dnō bōn pu rum pong
gods of procreation, Ayek and Alat, gods as benefactors of the soul,
ung bun pu rum pong djū la mat mong
the gods who lend the strength of life; if I know how to sacrifice, so
aug yu gang nān dō dō khing tsung go nāng aug ma yōn gong
I must do it. The god of my personal destiny knows it; if I do not
nān dō dō a rō a riom plō cho djū la aug yō
sacrifice, then may a long illness come, come. But if I do know
gang la rum gūm
how to perform the right sacrifice, then is that a godly thing.
djū la aug ma yō nāng gang na mung gūm
But if I do not know how to perform the right sacrifice that is a demonish thing.
dō dō aug la ma yōng gang na mung ni gom
If I do not perform the right sacrifice, then shall the demon be here.
a lum aug dūm go ayek alat plō
In this way and at this place Ayek and Alat come here!
ayō ting ze rum gūm go yu gab djong
We shall not become traitors to the ancestral gods, if we,
ati nāno nang go su gad shō bu ze yuk
the descendants, sacrifice in this way. It is our duty to sacrifice thus.
shō thing go ning long fat ze yuk gom
As our ancestors did, so we also do honour in this way.
go yu zum nān aug dūm go chi leg so log mat nān.
We, the living, set on this spot (head of the bull) millet beer and rice-offering.

755 rice-offerings. Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestors in ancient
782 times did—so do we now. We do not know how to speak in
776 this world; but we have arranged the sacrifice. As this world's life-spirit we, creatures, hold the branches of the Na sŏ and Na ling trees. We, the sons of Bong-thing, the Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. That is the place to carry the Na sŏ and Na ling branches which I take consciously. Now I swear an oath to Ta she tak bo thing. Therefore I push a stone into the earth and I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth (as witnesses of the oath). In this place I take the oath. I do it in our own interest. Today, in this very place I take the oath. The paths of the demons are barred. Through the wonderful powers of Ta she tak bo thing I offer this sacrifice. Henceforward we offer a compensation, a bodily substitute. Send no more suffering to this person."[61b]

[539] 61b. Fat bam a re a thing a nĭŏ sa dal thing gung dŏ si ayit
Thus we sacrifice. As our ancestor did since ancient times,
plŏ nŏng sug bam
so we also perform the sacrifice.
sag dŏm lyang ga go yusŭng dŏn ma hŏn go yu rum
In this world we do not know how we should speak. We have arranged
tak so sog
the sacrifice (rum, god, has also the meaning of sacrifice). As this
dŏm lŏng ming tang ga son chio nin cho sa liang ga na sŏ na ling
world's life spirit we, creatures, hold here branches of the Na sŏ and Na ling
nom bong thing hŏb
trees (similar to the Nepalese Panisage and Sau tree). We, Bong-thing sons,
bong thing la mi hŏb nŏng ga sog dŏm ga
we, Bong-thing sons of fire, hold them in our hands. Here in this place carrying
na sŏ na ling nom, hŏ nŏng go tsam nŏng ga.
the Na sŏ na ling branches, I take hold of them consciously.
ta she tak bo thing riak to long tang.
To Ta she tak bo thing I swear an oath. I push a stone into the earth.
bu tsum bu yak to nŏn
I plant a beautifully decorated bamboo in the earth. (This ceremony takes place
at the swearing and oath taking, so that the oath is sworn over the stone and the
bamboo, which are placed side by side.)
sag dŏm riak to sŏn tŏn do ga
Here in this place I take the oath. In our own interest I do it.
sa rong sa ni riak are to nŏn sog dŏm ga
Just today I take the oath here. Thus here in this place
mung sa lom chat are tak bo she thing sa
the demons' ways are barred. Now through Tak bo she things' wonder-
a dyăn sa lŏm nŏng to Along ren me sŏ lŏm
powers, I bring this sacrifice. From now on, a bodily substitute, a
sa lŏ lŏm bo son arcka gi dŏk ma hin
compensation we give. Send no more suffering to this person."

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The ceremonies are the same as those described above. Each Bong-thing has his own texts. The general scheme is, however, the same. Emphasis is always laid on the claim that they are based on the old traditions. The following text proves this in a particular manner:

"The genesis of Chi, the genesis of the intoxicating drink Dyō. This arose from an old tradition. The place of origin is where the Sang li and Sang log trees originated. In the interest of the whole world and for our use, O messenger of God, come hither. Tak bo thing, the wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world. Now again come down for the creation of the world. Like the tradition of the Rong, the tradition of the sons of Bong-thing came in place of the Bamboo books. It is the custom of the ten Rong sons to make a synopsis of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the water, and of the whole world.[82] The world of the

82. "Fiang it dyō it
Chi's genesis, Dyō's intoxication genesis! (fiang is millet beer, and is looked on as female; dyō is an intoxicating drink, made from a substance different from millet, and is looked on as a male).

lung tān o bo nang plō — sang li sang log cho sa lyang ga plō
This arose from an old tradition. — The place of origin is where the Sang li

[illegible] pair of trees originated! (Several holy trees are known. Na-ō and Na-ling were already mentioned. Two others are called Mong-chial and Sā-lavio. They make three bundles of branches from these trees. One is planted in front of the altar. The Mun or Bong-thing holds the two others in his hands when he wishes to prophesy. These holy trees are expressly created and handed to men by God for ritual purposes. This is an analogy of the tree of the world).

ang dōm tam ga — son sa dān dog ga rum fig rum plō
In the interest of the whole world and for our use, messenger of God come here! (fig rum is the messenger or servant of God).

Tak bo thing sa a dyān rum — lyang it ga da mu
Tak bo thing, wonder-power-god, came down for the creation of the world.

lyang it ga da — rong sa lung tān
For the creation of the world come down here. — As the Rong tradition, the

bong thing kob sa po mik po thong chio — sa lung tān plō
Bong-thing sons' tradition, came in place of the bamboo books. The synopsis

lyang it — ung it — yang ming yang song
of the tradition of the creation of the earth, of the creation of water, of the creation of the whole world

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demons also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, a loving and adequate blessing to all. According to the origin of the tradition of our ancestors, our grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren must perfectly act. Then only shall we be blessed. If we fail to act in this manner it will bring us no good. The Dar gods will destroy the heart. But if we act in the manner prescribed, our ancient forbears, gods of destiny—the Darmit—will prepare an abundance of good things. If we do not know how to act in the right manner, the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, will always be angry at heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum, is pleased always, the heart will always find joy. The Primeval God, the God of abundance, will himself give us the joy. The god, Fat dzag yö sa fi, will be pleased always. If all of us, creatures, perform the adoration through sacrifice, we shall obtain the rich rewards of the sacrifice. If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured by sacrifice we shall be given a house.[82a]

82a. to pong sa lung tän rong höb ga ti sa tim bam mung sa sog
is the custom of the ten Rong sons. The world of the demons
döm are ga bam mung ka tön sö pe tyo
also exists here. The Mung give, in truth, loving and
gön ga tag göng sa mön lam ma tong dö do abu amu sa lung tän plo
adequate blessing to all. As our ancestors' tradition
song sa ga yu sün nin höb song ni tönön sug lang bam sö lang bam
originated thus, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren
must act accordingly, and indeed perfectly act.
ga yu chin lob top cho. sug ma gön na log non
Then shall we receive blessings. If we do not act so it will be bad.
rum dar pong la söm d,u chogu yu sug lang bam dö do niu thing sa yo
The Dar gods will kill the heart. If we act so, our ancient ancestors'
king tzum darmit rum pong la ayot ni chio go yu sug ma
gods of destiny, the Darmit, will prepare abundance. If we do not
gön gong na da lyang sa kyu rum
know how to act accordingly the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la süm kio cho da lyang sa kyu rum
will always have an angry heart. If the God of heaven, Sa kyu rum,
na la go gong sum riu cho ayot rum
is always pleased, the heart will be happy. The God of abundance,
pum rum hö do nöm chio. fat dzag yö sa fi rum na la go kio
the Primeval God himself will give it. Fat dzag yö sa fi god will always be pleased.
go yu sog döm ga soo min nöng fat yu gong na
If we all in this world, if we creatures perform the adoration through sacrifice,
fat sa ayot tap chio
then shall we obtain the riches of the sacrifice.
Chiö rum ayot ayit rum fat yu gong
If the God of heaven, the God of abundance, is honoured through sacrifice
li tap chio dö do niu nyu sug gang
then shall we obtain a house. If we accomplish much work in our fields

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If we accomplish a great amount of work in our fields we shall obtain an abundance of things. Darmit (god) will always grant us a happy destiny. If the lines in our foot and palms are worn out through much work, we shall obtain an abundance of things. If you do not understand how to work, you will not obtain the fruits of blessing. We honour Dar by an adoration of God. I shall perform this work until I sweat blood. Thus I work. A handful, a finger-tip-ful of the sacrifice is offered to the gods of procreation in the other life. Take it, O God, as many sacrifices. These are the fruits of the earth. All people together offer rice. When we sacrifice, many should do it together. That is the right way. God will then be at peace. But if we do not do it, then the gods of procreation will be displeased with us. We, living this life, must eat and work. If we do not work, God will not love us. The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.[82b]

82b. ayot top chio — dō do king tzum darmit na la go chio
we shall obtain abundance. — A good fate, Darmit god will always grant us.

dyang dzum — gō dzum — sūd dyet sug gan sa — ayot top chio
If our foot and hand-lines are all worn out through much work, we shall obtain abundance.

sug ma gōn na mong — gong nō chiu
If you do not understand how to work you will not obtain

lop apot ma top na — rum sa chiong — dar sō chiong
the fruits of blessings. — As adoration of God we honour Dar.

nāst sug vi ai fet nōng ga — sug bō nang yug sug
I will do this work till I sweat blood. — Thus I work.

mō tnō a ping ga — ayek rum ga — go ri go chion dza
In the other life to the gods of procreation, a handful, a fingertipful

apōt — rum ga blad nom pō tat chio
of the sacrifice is offered. — God, take it as many sacrifices.

apot sog dam are ga bam — mang sa min de pō nōng
The fruits of this earth are of this kind. — All people together offer rice.

sa hō tōng sa sug lang adyap — do sug gad gang na
When we sacrifice, then many should do it together. — Then is it right.

rum na la — apo ni chio — sug ma gōn na
For God it will then be peace. — If we do not do it, then will the

ayek stat rum na la ga yum hlum non ne. — tnō are ga bam ba sug la yo sam
gods of procreation be displeased with us. — We, living in this life,

la yong gad chio — sug la ma yu na — gang la rum na la
must work and eat. — If we do not work, then God will

a go ma mad ni rum pum thing hō do sa dōn ga — lōd nan chiong ta tnā dyō
never love us. — The Primeval God himself says that we should go at the right time.

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776 But we fail to understand it. We are naked at the time of our birth. Now too we are naked. When time will
[761] cease for us, the time of our death, it is impossible to say. We cannot give any news of the land of the gods. And at the time God calls us, mother and father cannot call us back. When the day of death is at hand, neither elder brothers, sisters, children nor daughters-in-law can call us back. When the day of the Lord dawns, then indeed has death passed away."[82c] The sacrificial texts quoted give us an idea of their vast varieties.

(i) Other Sacrifices

796 Although the Mun and the Bong-thing wield such a great
782 influence over and dominate the whole sacrificial organisation, there are all the same, some sacrifices which do not come within their sphere.

An old Lepcha said to us, "For our original sacrifice we, the Rong folk, offer the intoxicating drink Chi, in a wooden vessel together with rice and small dried birds on a banana leaf-plate. The Chi had to be prepared by a young girl who
[781] was still a virgin. The little birds had to be shot by a young lad who had had no sexual relations with anyone. The

[539] 82c go yu ma dyak ne djek go rung a gün do
But we do not understand it. At the time of our birth we are naked,

djek lo tang ka tzäd ga la a gün lo tang gäm
at present time we are also naked. When our time is over

amäx sa sut de dön ma gön
to tell the time of our death, that is not possible.

rum lyang sa sut ma gön
To give news of the land of the gods is not possible.

rum nöng lo lek dö tzäd ga abu amu lin ma gön chiang chia
At the time when God calls us, father and mother cannot call us.

pe plö lad chiang gam anam anom aköb asen
When the day of death is coming, elder brothers, elder sisters, children and

nyom li ma top nag ni rum sa nag ni tag zaam che lat nan
daughter-in-law can no longer call us. When the day of God is coming, then is death passing away."

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sacrifice is called Rum-fat or Lyang-rum-fat. It is performed once a year in honour of Rum or Pum-thing-rum somewhere in December or January. The flesh of the little birds can be dispensed with at this sacrifice, but the rice and Chi are essential. Generally it is the master of the house who is also the family priest who performs the sacrifice, but it can be performed by anyone who understands the rites."[83]

Sam-sing from Maria-Basti has described to us the hunter's sacrifice in the following terms: "The Supreme God whom we honour originally was called Assal. We do not know any more where he lives, and so each tribe honours its own god of the hunters. In the Yok-song-mo tribe to which I belong we practise the cult of the Mut. For this we keep cocks. Whenever we go out a-hunting we take a cock and present it to the god of the hunters. After the hunt the cock is killed and sacrificed to the god, and its flesh is consumed by us.

A part of the game killed at every hunt has to be offered to Mut. We cut little pieces from each part of the body of the animal wrap them up in leaves and offer them up to the god. After the sacrifice has been offered we eat the meat ourselves. No woman is ever allowed to be present at the sacrifice to Mut." Another member of the Rong tribe called this god of the hunters by the name of Dju-thing. He honours him in the manner described above. He also stressed the fact that a woman is never allowed to take part in, nor even to look on, this sacrifice to the hunting god.

Gorer describes a sacrifice which all hunters offer together in the month of October, *viz.* the sacrifice to Mut-rum-Tseu or Pong-rum, the protector of wild animals and patron of hunters. The wife of this god is called Shing-rum. The sacrifice consists of roasted corn, chi, dried fish and birds, ginger, arum roots and a few other tubers, sugar-cane, banana, and worm-wood flowers. No woman is allowed to know what is being prepared. She is not allowed to come near. The presence of a woman who is having her menstrual period is regarded as particularly dangerous. Chi must be prepared by a virgin or she should at least pour it into a vessel. The birds must be procured by a chaste youth. If a deer has

83. Report from Kalimpong.

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been killed, then it is imperative that a sacrifice to the hunting god must be performed. The animal is already carved up in the forest. To quote Gorer : "Big leaves are cut and put on the ground and then the animal is divided up and the head is put in front with a foreleg and third leg on either side and singed intestines in the middle. This is all offered to Pong-rum, and the hunter crouching behind and speaking very softly and slowly, gently throws the burnt intestines bit by bit over the animal's head. On his return to the village great care must be taken to see that no woman sees the animal's head ; if she does, the hunter will have no success in future."[84]

The sacrifice of the hunters are a replica of the primitive sacrificial ceremonies. There is, however, a new element which comes to the forefront in the present sacrifices, *viz.* the strict exclusion of all women ;—the women may not even be spectators, or even so much as see the head of the animal which has been killed and which is to serve as a victim at the sacrifice. The virginity of the youth and the maiden who prepare the sacrificial materials, is strongly emphasised. Such hunting sacrifices are well known among many primitive tribes in India, *e.g.* among the Irulas, Kurumbas, etc.

The Rong believe that the bow and arrow which they require for hunting are given to them by the deity, and that even the game is, so to say, given over to them by the deity. This enables us to get a better idea of the sacrifice to the god of the hunters. One of the legends recorded by Stocks runs as follows, "Once upon a time Tashey-thing made friends with Mon-tsu-mot, a wild she-boar whom he married and with whom he lived happily for ten years. Not far away from their home was a great rock hanging over a precipice where a rock bee (vot) had its hive, and Tashey-thing wished to bring the honey home one day himself. It was a very dangerous task to reach the rock even with the aid of a rope ; and Tashey-thing, being helped by many animals and insects, made them all swear to hold the rope firmly and not to let it go. But his wife Mon-tsu-mot was not faithful, and wished to get rid of Tashey-thing.

84. op. cit. p. 244 sq.

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136 [171] Gaval and Arna are the Hindi names for the water-buffalo. In Bombay State, as far as the Central Provinces the name Ran bhainsa, water buffalo, is used for Gaur. In Mahrathi, it is pronounced gavya; in Tamil, katucrimai; in Malayalam, karthu; in Kanarese, kar-kona.[69]

[231 232] The wild Gaur and the Mithan cannot be tamed. The Gayal, which is wrongly called the Mithan, has no wild ancestor, but is only a cross between the wild bull and the domesticated cow. A clear proof of the mongrel characteristics of the Gayal is this: In districts where the Gaur are numerous and therefore more frequently mate with the domestic cows, the Gayal shows some resemblance to the Gaur, —the massive build with high backbone, etc. Through the constant adding of wild blood this characteristic is preserved, *e.g.* in the upper mountains of Assam. In districts where the Gaur are rare as for instance in the Chin hills, the build of the mongrel is smaller, the ridge at the back disappears, the dewlap grows larger and the horns more like those of the cows. By the fourth generation the maternal component of the ordinary cattle is again quite dominant.[70] In these circumstances one should no longer look for the wild ancestors of the Gayal.

224 262 825 There is also a species of animals which the Rong do not kill, *viz.* the wild dog which is reddish in colour. Nor are they allowed to eat the flesh of tame dogs and horses. In this respect they are on par with the Tibetans.

776 There are legends pertaining to other curious creatures which are supposed to live in the thick virgin forests. Bön-män-che is the Nepalese name; a "Wild man" who is said to be about as large as a great monkey. The Lepcha name for this creature is Sog-pa. Another being is the Bön-sacri, the "Wild magician." This creature is believed to kidnap the children of men and lead them away into the depths of the forest, where it instructs them in the arts of magic and makes them so accustomed to the wild forest life that they shun the company of men. The wives of the Bön-sacri are the Idini, the "Wild wives." The Rong hunter must be proof against [782] the attacks of all these beings, and so he pays tribute to and

69. S. H. Prater, Indian Animals, Bombay, p. 204.
70. S. H. Prater, op. cit. p. 201 sq.

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renders homage to the god of the hunters in order that he may obtain his protection.

The following sacrifices which are associated with agriculture and the harvest are of a completely different type. We have already had occasion to mention Se-dyu, the goddess of farming. She elects women only and passes on from mother to daughter. The women perform sacrifices in her honour at least twice a year—before the sowing in the springtime and after the harvest in autumn.

The pig and the cock serve as sacrificial victims. For this sacrifice the pig comes first in the order of preference, while in the ceremonies described above we have seen that the bull is given the special preference. The understanding of this factor helps to dispel the apparent contradiction that exists in the opposing claims of some Lepchas who maintain that the pig is the most valued of all animals and others who assert that the cattle are the most valued. It all depends on the type of sacrifice which is being offered at a particular moment. In the very early days they did not employ cattle to plough with; cattle were harnessed very much later. The sacrifice is performed inside the house in a corner. The man can be present if a woman performs the sacrifice, and the man can even perform the sacrifice when the woman is, for some reason, prevented from performing it.

Apart from these private sacrifices to the god of agriculture, there are also ceremonies performed at festivals and solemnised by all. There are spring and autumn sacrifices. These are associated with the ancestors of Mayal, who as we saw earlier, provided mankind with the first seeds, and instructed them about the manner of cultivation. "The people of Mayal are worshipped exclusively in connection with the crops of rice, millet and maize; on all other occasions they are markedly excluded from the long list of supernaturals who are called on to partake of the sacrifices and give their blessings. Everybody must worship them on two occasions, after the completion of the sowing and at the harvesting of the dry rice; in these houses where there is a Mun or a knowledgeable old man, they are also prayed to in the winter to keep away snow and hail, in the spring to protect young crops and

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after the sowing of each of their grains, they are offered sakyou-saat to ensure a good harvest.

Only the three crops are connected with the people of Mayal; the others come from different supernaturals, barley, wheat, buckwheat, and wet rice come from Kongen-bu, the god of Kinchenjunga, a Sikkimese deity; no important ceremonies are connected with these crops. Cardamum, as has already been said, comes from Nepal and is under the patronage of the foreign Elaiji-nyou, who dislikes women, in particular menstruating women. The people of Mayal are said to share this dislike and should a menstruating woman visit them there would be the terrible result that all the people of Mayal would fall asleep and would not send the migratory birds."[71]

The spring sacrifice is simple. The autumn sacrifice on the contrary is very copious. For this an old experienced man is elected to represent the ancestors of Mayal and he is called Mayal-mu. A woman is selected to represent the Talyeu-mu, the sister earth. When the ceremony cannot be completed on the same day, those taking part in it stay with each other for the night. There is free intercourse between the sexes; however, the comprehensive ban on incestual relations is not broken. This recalls the sexual freedom which is indulged in at the festivals of Spring and Autumn among many Asiatic peoples and which we observed in the Tibeto-Chinese province Tsing-hai among Chinese, Tujen Tibetans, etc. The representation of ancestors and agricultural spirits by masquerading in their guise is again a well-known custom among Asiatic primitives usually connected with the New Year festivals. Thus the sacrifices of the hunters and of the cultivators stand out in sharp contrast with each other.

The Lepcha, Suliman, gave us informatin about another family sacrifice to the Supreme God, Ta-she-thing. Anyone who knows the rites may perform it, whether it be a man or a woman. The one who performs it must fast for three days before the ceremony, *i.e.* he must not eat the chief meal of rice but he can eat the other dishes. During this time he must take three baths. The bathing place is prepared near the

71. Gorer, op. cit. 238 sq.

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river. The bath consists of a complete immersion. After the last bath he comes into the house to perform the sacrifice.

An altar about 80 centimetres high is erected, and bananas and roots which serve as offerings are placed on it. Flowers are placed on either side. This sacrifice takes place in September. Many people assemble for it, and they later partake of food and millet beer.

One kind of sacrifice consists simply of the action of the man, who before drinking either millet beer or tea, sprinkles some drops with his fingers.[72]

(j) Parallels to the myths and the ritual of the Rong

The intoxicating drink plays an important part in all the sacrifices offered by the Rong. One kind is Chi, a brew of millet. The second is Dyō, an alcoholic drink, which is made not of millet but of different components. In all the sacrificial texts and rites a special importance is attached to this stimulant. As the text indicates, there is an individual deity personifying the intoxicating drink, *viz.* Dōn-dyō-chi-log, who is also represented among the Tormas and is rendered the same homage as the Supreme God and his family. This intoxicating drink according to the tradition of the Rong is of heavenly origin. Tradition has it that at the very outset the ferment used in the manufacture of the intoxicant was brought to mankind from the other side of the world in a cunning manner by a special messenger. Immortality, too, is linked up with this drink. Birds have a special part to play in connection with both these drinks. The quail is considered to have performed the Chi sacrifice after the deluge. Two birds are said to have fetched the drink of immortality from the land of the gods. Then a two-fold effect which causes merriment is described. When the snakes drank Chi, they went mad. To quote Stocks, "You have stolen my ferment, if you only know how to use it, you would be able to offer the 'chi' to the Rum, but now you will find that it always excites you, it will cause you all to quarrel, it may even perhaps kill you.

72. Cfr. op. cit. p. 346.

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of the Rong. It belongs therefore to their old ancestral estate, and is not borrowed from other peoples. 273 796

In the Soma-Haoma sacrifices of the Indians and the Iranians, we find striking parallels. "The conception of a stimulating drink of the gods appears to go back to the Indo-European times. The drink which manifests secret, ecstatic, and exciting power to men, must be an essence of the gods, and a special possession of the gods... The dwelling place of this drink of the gods appears to have been heaven according to Indo-European beliefs.... From its heavenly storage place, the bird of the god, or the god himself in the guise of a bird, fetched or stole it from the jealously watching demons; the eagle of Indra; the nectar carrying eagle of Zeus; Odin who as an eagle carried away mead.... Finally it may perhaps be accepted, that the conception of godlike immortality is already connected at the time of the Indo-Europeans with the drink of the gods (Amrta, Ambrosia). As human life is preserved by taking meat and drink and specially death is warded off for a time, at least by medicine, so must the godly existence also depend on the partaking of a drink whose essence is immortality."[74] [17]

The sacrifice as the nourishment of the gods is known to the Rong. "Then Tashey-takbo-thing wished to make his first sacrifice to the Rum and called the ngo and the ngo-yong.... 796 782 773

At the offering time the hands and feet of the Tashey-takbo-hing quarrelled with his belly saying, 'We work very hard the whole time, but you, the belly, do nothing.' And the belly replying said, 'Very well then, as you believe that, for two or three days I shall really do nothing. I will rest and shall not eat anything.'

Then the hands became so weak they could do nothing, and were soon unable to move. And the belly said, 'If you find me something to eat, you will find you regain strength and vigour.' And as he ate a little the hands and feet regained strength, and they knew they were defeated. So they planted sugar-cane (nut pa-mam), pine-apples (bor-pot) and all kinds of fruit which grew abundantly.

74. H. Oldenberg, Die Religion des Veda, Stuttgart-Berlin 1917, p. 100 sq.

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796 782 773 And Tashey-takbo-thing took a supply of all these fruits with many fish from the river and sacrificed them. This was the commencement of all offering."[78]

776 273 Thus among the Rong, as among the Indo-Iranians the stimulating drink, finally becomes a deity. "Further, the sacrificial drink filled with daemonic strength,—like the sacrificial fire—has become a mighty god."[78]

But Soma-Haoma is however most intimately bound up with cattle. "Soma is dressed in the cow robe—the admixture of milk in it."[78a] We noticed, among the Rong, the butter decoration on the bowl of Chi.

796 782 171 Significant also is the rite by which the Lepchas place the offering of Chi on the forehead of the bull, and so bind more closely together the cult of the stimulant with cattle. All the same both cults remain autonomous and independent. This is of special value as it throws more light on the old Indo-Iranian ritual and sacrifices. Some scholars today think it is possible to connect the following :

"The cult of the killing of the Soma in the form of little plant shoots in the Vedic sacrifice and the myth of the killing of the Haoma bull in the mythology of Mithra have a broad ethnological connection, and are the Aryan shaping of an ancient prehistorical mythology and cult....Now if Zarathustra repeatedly declaims with passion and holy anger against the slaughtering of bulls it is not, as has been maintained, for agricultural and utilitarian reasons, but because this ritual act formed the essential constituent part of the old religion. Now within the Soma sacrifice, the highest and most solemn sacrifice of the old Indians, it is clear that the offering of a gift to the gods was not the most essential thing, but the renewal of the original sacrifice of the gods. As the gods in heaven prepare the Soma rain for the good of the world, so does man in the holy ceremony prepare the drink of immortality which stands for rain as the source of life, in order to share in the blessing of the godlike original sacrifice and to make sure of it for himself. And for all the slaughtering of beasts and men, which

78. Stocks, op. cit. p. 386.
78. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 172.
78a. op. cit. p. 178.

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Jensen has reported, it is likewise evident, that they occurred as a repetition of that first killing, from which new life was engendered.

Thus it is clear then, that the slaughtering of cattle which Zarathustra again and again condemned, was the imitating and repeating of the indeed cruel, but—blessed killing of the original bull.

And in the closest connection with this, Zarathustra condemned in the same place the Haoma sacrifice, although, it is true he does not mention the name Haoma, but uses instead, an old unmistakable title of the Haoma.

This simultaneous mentioning of the Haoma endorses my opinion that with the words, 'the bull must be killed,' the sacrifice of the bull in the Mitra cult and its cosmic meaning are alluded to." This bull is said to be identical with Haoma.[77]

Very correctly does Lommel lay emphasis on the drawing of ethnological and prehistorical parallels for the explanation of the ritual. Our case is specially instructive for such an interpretation. The beliefs of the Rong and their rites prove beyond the shadow of doubt that the cult of the intoxicating drink and the cult of the bull are not identical, but are two altogether independent cults, and moreover that they are not the imitation of the original offering of the deity itself. Among the oldest ethnological tribes this mystification is not to be found; but it is certainly so among the younger peoples especially among those with the peculiar mystery-religion. Others believe that the intoxicating Haoma has been supplanted by the milk-haoma which links with an old milk-mystery. The Mithra religion is Apolonic, sober, formalistic; the Iranian Gatha-religion on the contrary, is Dionysiac, and is familiar with the Haoma delirium, with ecstacies, trances, and the wandering of souls in a state of trance.

Among the Indo-Iranians the Soma-Haoma sacrifice was performed in spring time for all the gods.[78] We have pointed out that exactly the same thing happens in the case of the Rong. The Rong-thing and the Mun, by partaking of

77. H. Lommel, Mithra und das Stieropfer, in Paideuma, Bd. III, H. 6/7, Juni 1948, p. 216 sq., p. 212.
78. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 449 sq.

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Chi, rouse themselves into a state of ecstasy, and then began their dances and their soul-wanderings in a state of ecstasy.

A brief description of the manner in which the Rong prepare the intoxicating drink would not be out of place here. Chi is obtained from the small millet. The well-ripened grains are dried in the sun for three days, and then cooked in an earthenware pot which is covered over with a bamboo mat. A larger barrel is inverted over this. After the cooking, the ferment is added, and the fermentation begins. The fermented liquor is left in the sun for several days so that the alcoholic content may become stronger. Finally the grains are squeezed out and the chi-brew is thus obtained. The fermenting grains are then put into a bamboo barrel and warm water is poured over them. This water becomes slightly alcoholic and is sucked in through a little bamboo tube. The method of drinking beer through a little bamboo tube, in order to avoid the impure sediment, is a very old custom indeed, and had been practised by the Hitties. It is a universal practice among the Himalayan peoples.

The other type of alcoholic beverage, Dyō, is made from medicinal roots, herbs, or other fermentable plants. The preparation would depend on the material used in each case. The roots are soaked in warm water, the fermenting agent is added and the whole concoction allowed to ferment. After a few days the molasses is squeezed out. It seems that the preparation of the Soma was similar, but the secret of the extraction has been lost.

The home of the Soma plants is supposedly the high rocky mountains. "Soma on the rocks"[79]; the eagle robs Soma from the rocks.[80] It is "an inhabitant of the mountains," a "growth of the mountain world."[81] In one place the name for such a mountain is said to be Mujevat.[82] According to the Mahabharata (XIV) this was a mountain to the rear of the Himalayas. The plant was also a medicine and was called "Medicine for the sick."[83] The medicinal effect was so

79. Rigveda V, 85, 2.
80. op. cit. I, 93, 6.
81. X, 62, 4; XV, 9, 95, 4.
82. X, 34. 1.
83. Rigveda VIII, 72, 17.

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773 and cut it to pieces. Then he cleared the path for the waters
171 so that they could flow freely into the sea."[98]

Indra-Vrtra corresponds to the Iranian Tishtar-Apaosha. After the fight between them both had raged with unabated fury for three days, he appeared weary and about to give in. Whereupon he cried, "If men would perform sacrifices, I still could win." They therefore offered the Haoma sacrifice because of which the hero gained strength and conquered the demon. Indra had also obtained superb strength through the drinking of Soma. In the Rong myths the stimulant Chi had to be offered to God in order that he might be passified and let the floods abate. As the serpent is again linked in another way with the flood, the snake king as leader of the river Rung-nyo and the subsequent flood;—we do not believe that the Rong have, in this case, taken over Vedic Hindu myths, but have handed down, independently, their own legends, which are very slightly influenced by modern Hinduism.

The second motif is the saving of a pair or of a few people, who either saved themselves by taking refuge on a mountain-top or in a vessel. We have acquainted ourselves earlier with the Rong legend (page 40 sq.). In Atharvaveda (19·39·8) this event is recorded as having occurred in the Himalayas, "There was the arrival of the vessel; there was the peak of the Himalayas; there was immortality in sight; there grows the Kushta grass." Shatapatha Brahmana (1·8·1/10) describes how Manu was saved in a ship. According to the Vendidad of the Iranians, Jamshed (Yima) was locked up in a "vara" by Ahura-Mazda, the Supreme God, in order that he might be saved from the great flood.

As the myths of the flood occur among so many Asiatic peoples (in the Near, Middle and Far East) there is no conclusive parallel about the saving of mankind as described in the myths of the Rong and Indo-Iranians. These legends could be drawn from several sources.

● 782 In the cult of the Rong, the sacrificing of bulls plays an outstanding part. For both, the living (during illness) and for the dead (in funeral ceremonies), the bulls must lose their

98. Cfr. H. Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 133 sq.

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lives. The same is true of the different important sacrifices offered in the course of the year.

On the contrary one of the traditions has it that the oldest material for offerings were Chi, the intoxicating drink, dried fish, and small birds. According to other traditions the number of objects is somewhat increased. "Every year we give fish (ngo), game (fo), rice-chi (mor-chi), beaten rice (ta-fa) and ginger (hing.) These are put on banana leaves and are offered at Shara near the Tulung monastery."[96] Another legend is as follows: "Tashey-takbo-thing took a supply of all these fruits with many fish from the rivers and sacrificed them. This was the commencement of all offerings."[97] This gives us an insight into the sacrificial practices of a people who live on game and the spoils of the chase, who offer the spoils and the collected eatable plants and fruits. The god of the hunt, Pong-rum, commanded the hunters to perform sacrifices to him.[98]

Completely different are the sacrifices of cattle, pigs and goats which are most closely linked up with the Mun-Bong-thing religion, as we have already seen from the reports of these priests.[99] But as these sacrifices are a very old custom of the Rong, it is obvious that the cattle offerings are old too. The cattle are, indeed, the Asiatic mountain Zebu, which have small horns and a rudimentary hump. In these days the Lepchas practise various methods of killing the victims. "Cattle are usually killed with a bow and arrow, shooting from very near, sometimes they are stoned or killed with a pointed knife. Pigs and goats are killed with a pointed knife if there is one, otherwise with a piece of sharpened bamboo."[100] The cattle are killed at the same time by the blow of an axe in the nape of the neck.

The sacrificing of cattle plays an important part in the ritual of many Asiatic mountain people. The Northern Sangtam tribe in Assam are familiar with such sacrifices during which beer is an important stimulant. Among the

96. Stocks, op. cit. p. 358.
97. op. cit. p. 356.
98. Cfr. above p. 77.
99. Cfr. p. 58 sq.
100. Gorer, op. cit. p. 105.

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776 Lakher, the Mithan must be shot with the bow and arrow.
782 These sacrifices are common among the different Naga
77/ tribes.[101] Lepchas, who during the war came to these parts of the country, state that the practices of these people are in many ways similar to and in harmony with their own practices.

We find the sacrificing of bulls common to the Thai, the Lolo, the Na-chi and the Tibetans. Cattle and pigs were of primary importance among the animal offerings of ancient China. In Iran, Zarathustra waged fanatical warfare against the cattle killers. In the "Bull Gatha" (29) the soul of the bull complains to the gods that cattle are handed over to the murderous lust of men and prays for help and protection. Ahura-Mazda calls on Zarathustra to provide some protection for the cattle. At the time when the Aryans in India still preserved their nomadic tedencies, they offered bull sacrifices. Aitareya Brahmana (11·1·8) says that men at first had the horse as the principal sacrificial animal. Later, cattle took the place of the horse ; the sheep replaced the cow, and in the end cats replaced the sheep. Ultimately, however, plant offerings totally ousted the animal offerings. This is however a subsequent construction. The sacrifices of cattle occur still in modern India and the Brahmins who perform the sacrifice in South India must also eat the flesh that has been offered, and by doing so, they do not violate the rules of the caste.

Already in the Mohenjodaro culture the pictures of bulls are linked with the name of the deity Kusi, Ikusi; they are of the greatest significance and could only originate from the cult motifs. Thus the Rong sacrifices of the bull contribute greatly to the significance which the bull-cult has for mankind.

Very interesting parallels occur between the hunting rites and sacrifices of the Lepchas on the one hand, and the primitive Indian tribes and North-East Asiatic peoples on the other. Just as the Rong believe that their hunt-god, [776] Pong-rum, incarnates himself in the form of bears, the

101. C. R. Stoner, The Feasts of Merit among the Northern Sangtam Tribes of Assam, Anthropos, Freiburg, 1950, Vol. XLV p. 1 sq.

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Jakuts, the Sojots, Tungus, etc., regard the bears as deities.[102] These people have almost developed a pronounced bear cult.

This certainly is not the case with the Rong ; but even they hold the bear in high esteem and consider it to be the most intelligent and clever of all the wild animals, nay, with traits that bear has a resemblance to human beings. The bear is taboo among some Indian tribes.

The women-folk of these tribes, like the Lepcha women, are strictly excluded from all contact with the game that has been captured for the sacrifice. "The relationship of woman to game is especially delicate among all Siberian peoples. Especially during menstruation or pregnancy, she may easily ruin the luck when men go on a hunt. Further, in her heedlessness she can cause the animals to shy off to another district."[103] When the game is being conveyed into the house, a meeting with women must be avoided at all costs. Some tribes do not even permit the game to be taken in through the door because women pass in and out of it. The game is brought in through a window or some other aperture.[104] It is customary among the Golden, as also among the Irulas, not to permit a woman to look at the head of the bear, just as the Rong conceal the head of the game from the eyes of woman. Thus there occur among the hunting people who are now so widely scattered, very great similarities in the hunting rites and usages. The same can be said of their arts of magic.

This similarity is markedly evident in the case of the Mun and Bong-thing of the Rong and the Siberian Shamans. The only difference is, as we have already pointed out, that the Rong do not employ the individual Shaman instruments such as the Shaman drums and the magic daggers. The Lepchas have certainly preserved the older form. The vocational calling of the Siberian Shamans and the Rong-Mun is closely allied. Both men and women are elected. "Werbitskij mentions in his decription of Shamanism in the Altai district, that the Shaman gift is at the same time an

102. U. Harva, Die religiösen Vorstellungen der altaiischen Völker, Helsinki 1938, p. 407 sq.
103. U. Harva, op. cit. p. 412.
104. op. cit. p. 414 sq.

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

illness which is hereditary in the family. Numerous examples prove that the Shaman disposition does in fact appear as a kind of illness."[105]

Our own studies have brought to light the existence of similar dispositions among the Rong. In both places there is the same conception of the spirits of Shaman. These spirits sometimes take the form of animals, *e.g.*, that of a bull. "His bull-form walks abroad, is also said by the forest Juraks, when the soul of a Shaman has departed to another world."[106] They also bring the deceased into the kingdom of the dead.[107] All these facts run a close parallel to our findings among the Rong and other primitive hunter tribes in India.

Further similarities are found in the mode of consecration and instruction. The Shaman costume however is fundamentally different. The Rong have no special costume, while among the different Siberian peoples, a wide variety of customs are worn.

(*k*) The Social Classes of the Rong.

According to the general tradition existent among the Rong, they claim to have been originally a race of hunters, and that in the very early times before the Tibetans, the Bhutanese and the Nepalese had infiltrated into their country, they lived as the free rulers of the immese forests which were their home. The Lepchas have a clear knowledge of the animals, the birds, the plants, the fruits and the roots, and can tell which are poisonous and which are edible. Even today the Lepcha will not starve if the harvest fails, for he will procure as his sustenance the edible leaves, fruits and roots from the forest. One such root is the dayout-buck. After being dug up it is broken into small pieces and soaked in water for three days to remove the poison and clear off the lye. A ferment is then added and a kind of beer produced. Another root is the dog-bo or bok-yik. It is cut up, the lye cleared, and then it is cooked and crushed. The broth is eaten like rice. This is of a pale violet colour.

105. op. cit. p. 462.
106. op. cit. p. 478.
107. op. cit. p. 478.

3: Bell G-5 (1904-21) 1928 AJ1 Tibet AJ1
Lepcha AK5

Soon afterwards the house, in which the *chō-ten* was kept, fell down. The *chō-ten* itself was broken, the corpse was uncovered and went tumbling down the hill-side, four hundred feet, rolling over and over. When the people went to look at it, they were astonished to find that not only was the corpse uninjured, except for a cut near one of the ankles, but that the flesh on the body was as fresh as during the lady's lifetime. They found, too, that it was pure flesh, and not built up with clay, as is the regular practice. The body was carried up the hill again and is encased now in a fresh *chō-ten*. All believe this story with the single-minded devotion to their religion that characterizes the Tibetan. They believe also that when the body was placed in the *chō-ten*, the cut would gradually heal up, as the lady was 'like a manifestation of the Buddha'.

The religion of the Lepchas of Sikkim resembles in many ways the pre-Buddhist faith of Tibet, known as *Pōn*. As to their funeral ceremonies the History of Sikkim says:

'When a person dies and a funeral ceremony has to be performed, it is done thus: They sacrifice a bull or cow, a fowl or pig, and believe that this is the present of the deceased to the spirits of his ancestors. For this purpose they slay a pig, and, having pierced the entire length of its body with a sharpened bamboo stake, the *Pōn-pōn* recites some prayers or incantations called *Pōn* for three days and nights.'

The Lepchas believe that their spirits are taken after death through subterranean passages to the local deities of Kinchinjunga [1]—the highest mountain in Sikkim and the third highest in the world—as well as to those of other mountains. Different sub-tribes among the Lepchas have different subterranean passages.

But Buddhism, after the Tibetan pattern, is firm set in Sikkim. And therefore many Lepchas nowadays resort to Buddhist rites. As in Tibet throughout the centuries,

[1] The pronunciation usual among Europeans. The correct pronunciation is *Kang Chen Dzö Nga*, 'The Five Treasuries of Great Snow'.